

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY.

### Some Questions for Reflection.

(Dr. Paul Gregorios)

1. Modern science, and the technology based on it, are comparatively new in the history of humanity - only a few centuries old. Science had once to fight for survival against the unjust onslaughts of the dogmatic western religion. That period is now happily over. Science has now come of age, and can stand on its own, not seeking any protection or promotion from religious circles.
2. On the other hand, Science itself had been tempted, especially in the light of some of her more spectacular achievements of the end of the last century, to claim certain dogmatic certainties for herself. But as our century draws to its close, dogmatic scientism becomes increasingly out-dated and unfashionable.
3. Today one notes at least four different attitude to Science and Technology occupying the centre of the stage.
  - a) First comes the popular view about science and technology, a view which is a kind of hang-over from the hectic days of triumphalistic scientism. This is the belief, widely held, that science and technology are potentially capable of solving all the problems of mankind. This naive view is especially common in the developing countries of the world, where the wide use of modern science and technology is comparatively new, and the marvels of science and technology can still make a great impression on the minds of ordinary people. I think this view is still rather common in India.
  - b) On the opposite extreme, and almost totally irrational, is the view of the Counter-culture Syndrome in advanced industrial societies. Theodore Roszak, for example (Where The Wasteland Ends, The Making of a Counter Culture) says: "Because science dominates the reality game of high industrial society, I am convinced that a hard critique of its Psychology now has everything to do with restoring our cultural health". (Wasteland, P.371) Acknowledging his debt to such contemporary thinkers as Abraham Maslow (solution proposed: 'hierarchical integration' of many modes of knowing, including those of Tao and Zen as well as the scientific), Lewis Mumford (a science based in "an organic world-picture"), Lancelot Law Whyte (integration

of art, ethics and natural philosophy within a 'science of form') Thomas Blackburn (integrate sense-experience, intuition and objectivity on a complementarity model), Arthur Koestler (anti-reductionist emphasis on wholes and systems), and others, Roszak charges that

"science is far too narrowly grounded in the personality. It closes out too much experience and in this way drastically distorts what it studies" (Wasteland, P.372).

His view is that "science has been lionized out of all proportion by the necessities of urban-industrial life and by the political opportunism of the technocracy". Roszak's solution is the "rhapsodic intellect", in which science is wedded to mysticism and art to produce a revolution of consciousness which restores the "sacramental vision of nature" to Science. But this revolution

"will happen, perversely and heretically at the fringes of our culture and work its way in toward the center. The Scientists, and guardians of single vision in urban-industrial society and the intellectual lynch-pin of the technocracy, may be among the last to hear the news" (ibid.p.378)

c) A third type of view comes from English-speaking philosophers of science. Despite the wide divergence among them, there is growing consensus among Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn, Paul Feyerabend and Stepehn Toulmin. While Popper argues for the autonomy of a "third world" of man-made ideas called scientific knowledge constantly in process of revision and evolution (Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach, OUP. 1972), Feyerabend argues for epistemological anarchism in science (Against Method, New Left Books, 1974). The second edition of Thomas Kuhn's Structure of Scientific Revolutions (with an added postscript) came out in 1970 (Chicago University Press) with his theory of paradigms further refined. Kuhn sees science as a 'way of seeing' through paradigms or picture-analogies, the paradigms themselves being in a process of constant revision and change, change not in accordance with any rational law, but almost haphazardly, often by revolution, most of the time through battles between rival paradigms created by congeries of specialists' communities" (See Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, Ed., Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge. p.253) Science is a system of theory choices, preference being for theories or paradigms with greater accuracy, scope, simplicity and fruitfulness. But these are not the only criteria for theory choice, which seems

to demands also some free creativity, ie. an irrational element as well.

All these philosophers, however, agree on one point - Science is not proven knowledge; it is one way of seeing reality, quite a successful way, admittedly. But no thinking person would claim infallibility for science, nor would he give it any methodological monopoly over human knowledge. Science is a useful tool, it helps us to predict certain aspects of reality and therefore to control them. It may also help us partially to understand the nature of reality, but cannot give us an adequate picture of it. Such a modest evaluation of science seems to be the one prevalent among most philosophers of science.

d) A fourth view of science is the one held in most socialist countries. It is difficult at the moment to document this view from primary sources, since western language sources are scanty. One of the best recent western studies is Loren R. Graham's Science and Philosophy in the Soviet Union. (Vintage Books, New York, 2nd ed. 1971, 584 pp) What we see here is a science-based natural philosophy. Marxist ideology itself claims to be the science of dialectical materialism, a scientific analysis of social reality. Graham calls "contemporary Soviet dialectical materialism"....."an impressive intellectual achievement" (p.430). His praise, - and let me add that the American Professor Graham is no Marxist or Marxist sympathizer, - is rather fulsome:

"In terms of universality and degree of development, the dialectical materialist explanation of nature has no competitors among modern systems of thought. Indeed, one would have to jump centuries, to the Aristotelian scheme of a natural order or to Cartesian mechanical philosophy, to find a system based on nature that could rival dialectical materialism in the refinement of its development and the wholeness of its fabric" (op.cit.p.430)

In other words the Marxist effort to integrate philosophy with science has no contemporary parallel in the West, where the two are kept in fairly watertight compartments even by many philosophers of science. One may question some of the assumptions of Soviet dialectical materialism but its rigorous effort to build an integral system that unites ideology, philosophy and science is more impressive than any other. But this also means that Eastern European scientists and philosophers of science do not share the uncertainty about science and

technology so characteristic of the contemporary western scientific thinkers. The west feels tempted to call the Soviet attitude 'Scientism' - the belief in the omni-competence of science. The Eastern European would deny that the epithet is merited. He would say that Marxism is the only ideology that integrates science in a larger framework that deals with all aspects of reality. It is a flexible ideology, which can give up a strict Laplacean type of determinism in the light of the insights of modern physics, but sticks on to causality despite indeterminacy at certain levels.

It is not a mere platitude to say that all these four views must contain some element of truth, though the degree of verity in each may be different. The third view which is the view of most thinking scientists outside the socialist world today, could be considered more modest and objective than the first or the second; but it does not raise the question of the role of science in the sum-total of human endeavour. It is that question that increasingly rises before us as western civilization itself goes through a measure of soul-searching and self-criticism.

The main point of this paper is to sharpen the articulation of this question and some related ones. Some of these questions are:

1. What degree of regularity and determinacy has to be assumed in reality in order to explain the fact that science has been 'successful'?
2. Does science provide objective knowledge of reality? Does the fact that at certain micro levels the observer is inescapably influencing the structure of the reality observed, lead to the conclusion that in all scientific knowledge pure objectivity is unattainable? What kind of objectivity does science provide? To what extent is the claim to objectivity questionable?
3. It has often been assumed that Science and Technology are by their very nature universal, while culture is by nature local. Can this view be sustained? How is modern science and science-based technology related to Western culture, and at what points do we need to beware of this relation in adapting modern science and technology to our needs in India? (This question is much wider than the issue of small, medium or appropriate technology).
4. On the hand, it is charged that the classical Vedanta tradition which denies any ultimate significance to historical and material reality is inimical to the development of modern science and technology in India. On the other hand, it is being argued that the view of



reality disclosed in modern physics is much closer to the world-view of Taoism, Buddhism and Hinduism than to West Asian religions like Judaism, Christianity and Islam (eg. Fritjof Capra, The Tao of Physics)

What is the truth in either of these assertions?

5. Science can promote certain values like integrity, honesty, clarity, etc. But most of the value questions facing society lie outside the purview of science as such. Some questions in scientific investigation are themselves not capable of scientific solutions. (eg. What degree of risk are we justified in taking in connection with experiments involving genetic mutation, and creation of new bacteria strains?) How does society make sure that the work of the scientist is itself subject to values and norms decided upon by society?.

6. Development of the scientific consciousness has been alleged to be detrimental to the development of the faculties like intuitive-ness, aesthetic sensitivity, vision of the whole of reality, etc. Is there any truth in this allegation? Have we over-valued science and technology because of their phenomenal success in the recent past? How do we correct this imbalance, and devote greater attention to the development of the other faculties of the human person?

7. Science tells us very little about the quality of life. And it is being increasingly realized that a higher quality of life should be a permanent orientation in all economic and social planning. Can Science play any role in quantifying or 'functionalizing' Quality of Life in such a way that it can be programmed into national planning? What indicators or parameters of Quality of Life are available for this purpose?

8. Research in Science and Technology usually finds funds mainly from two sources - defence establishments and large corporations. The interest of the former is in military technology and that of the latter in fairly quick profit. How can society ensure that research funds are available for scientific projects that genuinely promote human quality of life apart from defence utility or commercial profit?

9. Is it not a luxury for us in a country like India where 60% of our people still do not have a dignified human standard of living, to worry about the long-term cultural and spiritual consequences of adopting modern science and technology, since we have no other instrument available for removing that poverty? On the other hand, once you have taken the option to follow the road of science and technology and urban-industrial civilization, can you really

change direction in mid-course? Have we in India any other option than to follow this road and face the consequences when we get to the stage where the problems generated by the road tend nearly to over-whelm our humanity?.

10. In terms of political options and their ideological underpinnings, do we really have an alternative, a third way, a way which is different from, and avoids the pitfalls of, market economy 'capitalism' of some sort and centrally planned marxist type of socialism? Is it simply the formula of non-alignment plus mixed economy? Is there an ideological road that is politically viable which takes seriously our own cultural heritage and makes the best use of science and technology? Or are we condemned to the fate of formulating our positions only in relation to certain western positions, ie. opposition to some, partial acceptance of some, odd mixtures of different western positions, (mixed economy), qualifications of some of them (socialistic pattern of society), substitutes for Western concepts, often mostly in name (Sarvodaya, Janasakti)? Where is the forum where our scientific cultural minds and our spiritual leadership come together for a common creativity? Is our planning commission or our Education ministry the right place to lodge this concern? If not, do we need a new one, high-powered with creative strength, flexibility, time and resources?.

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# DOES HUMANITY HAVE A FUTURE?

Conclusions of a Five Year W C C Study  
On Science and Technology



*Metropolitan  
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When five years ago the World Council of Churches began the study, many people thought it was part of the diversionary tactics of the West, to draw attention away from the burning issues of justice in society. Perhaps at that time it partly was. For, the 1966 Geneva Conference on Church and Society had made even the World Council of Churches somewhat aware that there was global injustice, that the rich of the world were oppressing the poor and exploiting them, and that the North Atlantic countries had a lion's share in the guilt of oppression and exploitation in the world today.

If the W. C. C. and the rich Western Churches which form the bulk of its financial and personnel support were

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conscientiously to follow the lead of Geneva 1966, the Churches would probably have undergone severe persecution in all countries. For to expose the pattern of oppression and exploitation in the world is to invite persecution from the powers that be.

So in a sense, when the W. C. C.'s fourth assembly at Uppsala 1968 picked up "Development" rather than International Justice as its main emphasis for the coming years, the conclusion was easy to draw that Global Justice is still a hot potato, too hot indeed for the W. C. C. to handle. In that sense it was legitimate that the Department of Church and Society, which organized Geneva 1966, went on after Uppsala 68 to launch a five-year study programme on "The Future of Man and Society in a world of science-based Technology" rather than on the Future of Man in a World of Growing Global Injustice.

The study programme concluded with a big world pow-wow of scientists, theologians and sundry other professional conference-goers like the present writer, held at the Theological Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Bucharest (June 24 to July 2, 1974), on the topic "Science and Technology for Human Development. The Ambiguous Future and the Christian Hope".

Despite the bombastic title, the conference managed to keep up the fairly mediocre standards of most WCC Conferences. There was a flood of information, a bevy of luminaries, and a sickening torrent of words—all as usual.

Lynn White's wry, witty clever speech on "Technology and the Future of Compassion" did not get the attention it deserved partly because the man looked too chubby, rotund, funny and complacent in

the face of the enormous illness of humanity for which he was prescribing active compassion towards the whole universe as a single remedy. In sharp contrast was the African Jesuit Professor Mveng's (Cameroun) paper on "Cultural Values and the Future of Technology". American wit was no match for African wisdom. Seldom have I seen a French speech make so profound an impression on a largely English speaking conference. The sources of its wisdom lay more in African traditional lore than simply in the so-called Judaeo-Christian tradition. He spoke not only of the integral relation between Man and Cosmos in traditional African lore; he insisted that African culture taught men and women to read and understand the book of human destiny and the book of the cosmos in a single optique, and to discern one's true allies and real enemies in the world of reality.

And then came the fable of Evu-Mana, which gripped the conference; this was the African counterpart of the story of Adam and Eve. The story of a woman who was fishing in the forest for little fish, catching nothing after a whole day's toil; coming upon a gazelle that had just been arrowed down; taking the meat home, having a feast. A secret benefactor (Technology?) did this for her every day, so that she was no longer poor. Then after a few days the benefactor appears to her and asks to be taken home with her to her village, provided she could feed the benefactor. She agrees; he insists on getting inside her and being carried home in her stomach or womb. Once in the village, the benefactor inside her gets hungry and wants to eat. His appetite is insatiable. He eats and devours, until he consumes the whole village, all its people, animals, everything living. Finally, his appetite still unsatisfied, the benefactor reveals his true identity to her.

"I am hungry, hungry, hungry. I am Evu-Mana the demon of Death; my appetite is insatiable. Now you alone are alive; I must eat you too". Evu-Mana devoured the woman.

Evu-Mana, Mveng said with the simplicity of wisdom, is not technology, but the greedy demon of Consumerism, that possesses the body of humanity and finally devours humanity itself.

Despite the profound wisdom and truth of his analysis, Fr. Mveng's remedy left the conference unsatisfied—the merging of technology and culture.

Prof. Georg Borgstrom of Michigan State, formerly of Sweden, struck a distinctive note of prophetic passion, pleading "Back to Reality—a Basis for Ethical Guidance". He spoke convincingly about "the protein Empire" built on prevailing trade patterns, sucking all the nutrients of the world, in the shape of grain, oil-seeds, and sea-food, into the well-fed, but voraciously hungry stomach of the West. He castigated those who seek to palliate the hungry world's misery by verbal tranquillizers, religion being most guilty at this point. The Soaring Sixties have now given place to the Sobering Seventies. We have been deluding ourselves with dreams of a world of plenty while creating an oasis of affluence in the midst of a vast desert of penury. The affluent world has treated the rest of the world as a market to be tapped or as a field to provide them with food and fibres. We need now to see the world as people. The famous Kennedy question has to be enlarged. Not "what the world can do for us, but what can we do for our world?"

Science and Technology in the service of Consumerism, of culture, or of compassion - that seemed the way the question

was posed. To many from the Two-Third World, that way of putting the question seemed too paternalistic, and occidento-centric.

The weakness of the conference lay precisely in that. At Geneva 1966, the voices of Africa and Latin America were the loudest, and the West was put down to a guilty silence. At Bucharest 1974 care seemed to have been taken to make the Western voices loud enough not to be unheard. There was Margaret Mead, the President elect of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, loud enough to be heard around the world; Dr. Magnus Pyke, Secretary of the British Association for the Advancement of Science seeking in that inimitably entertaining Oxbridge donnish style with wit and cadence, but in vain, to convince us that science and technology were totally innocent and had done so much good to all around; Peter Odell (*Oil and World Politics*) himself *persona non grata* to the oil companies, strongly pleading that the multi-nationals were not the villains of the piece; the giant economist Kenneth Boulding telling the conference with astonishing insensitivity that exploitation was only a minor problem. Add Lynn White, President of the American Historical Association, Langdon Gilkey of the University of Chicago Divinity school, World Council Patriarch Willem Visser 't Hooft; you can hardly complain, as one perhaps could at Geneva 1966, that the white Western world was not adequately represented on the platform.

In contrast the speakers from the Two-Third World appeared mild-mannered, quiet, unstrident. Prof. Sam Parmar of India, the co-chairman of the conference, was low-key even in some of his most penetrating remarks. Hamilcar Herrera's (Bariloche Foundation, Argentina, Director

of Special Study on a Latin American world model in response to the Limits to Growth report of the Club of Rome) erudition was too vast to gain attention. Prof. Warwick Kerr of Brazil spoke about his own personal imprisonment and torture. Prof. Nathan Shamuyarira of Tanzania spoke quietly about Africa's determination to be self-reliant. Prof. Philip Shen of Hong Kong seemed to have been specially chosen to represent a conservative Asian view. On the whole the Two-third world, including Prof. Mveng, gave the impression that little purpose was served by branding the West as the culprit, when our own houses were not very much in order.

The socialist countries of Eastern Europe also made very little impression on the conference. Minister Mircea Malitza, Counsellor to the President of Romania, sounded blandly Western, almost consumerist, but eloquent on socialist achievements in Romania. And Eastern Europe seemed dead scared of all this criticism of consumerism, perhaps because they are only barely getting into it now. There was little response from European socialist countries to the humanist critique of science-technology.

On the theological side, the confrontation was not so much between science and theology, as between the ancient Eastern tradition and the younger Western tradition. Scientists were, in general, not prepared to expect much from Western

theology. And there was no major Western theological presentation. The theological working group's report came under heavy fire. No Black Theology, no Liberation Theology, but just more of the old Bland Theology.

Only Charles Birch of Australia, the other co-chairman of the conference, produced a report from his group which was both substantial and ample in size, full of bold fresh analyses and insights.

The reports, it is hoped, having gone through various stages of WCC processing will make some difference to the Nairobi Assembly this year. (The preparatory work for Bucharest was exceptionally good).

One last caveat. This writer was struck by the political naivete of the experts in Science and Technology. When will we get that dialogue going, between science-technology and economics-politics? People seemed sometimes to be assuming that since the experts are so compassionate and full of good will, the catastrophe can be avoided, if everyone just gets in and does his or her little bit along with the experts. At other times the facts seemed to question the very assumption that humanity has a future at all.

Without justice, who wants a future, anyway?

(With acknowledgment to *The Christian Century, Chicago*).

Many of us ~~who are~~ non-Marxists are beginning to be convinced that Marxist philosophy is unique <sup>in its effectiveness.</sup> It is precisely as a philosophy of human society in process of historical development that it manifests its uniqueness. Engels' speech at the graveside of Karl Marx on March 17, 1883 expresses this view "Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of the development of human history"

The scientific study of human development enables not only to satisfy our curiosity about how the process takes place, but also to control and direct it. This element of control and direction of social processes cannot be independent <sup>or over above</sup> of the laws of the process itself. On the contrary, conscious control and direction by human effort is part of the process. ~~Itself. Now~~

Since Marx himself tried to dissociate the processes of development from the element of human volition integral to it, he stressed the notion of 'historical necessity', which sounds almost like a determinist or fatalist way of thinking. But Marx was aware of the

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1. \* Marx-Engels, Selected Works, II. pp 153-154.

artificiality of the dissociation between 'natural necessity' and human volition. He sought to overcome the dissociation by insisting upon the indissociability of theory and ~~practice~~ praxis. This means that the theory focuses on the element of historical necessity while the praxis orients human volition along the lines shown by theory.

Is it true however to say that theory is science and praxis is technology; ~~is~~ that in the scientific study of societal processes of development we study what is objectively given, while in praxis we use techniques to modify, control, direct and manipulate what is given?

In Darwin's theory of evolution, whatever the species does for its own survival is itself determined by the laws of natural necessity. Is it the same in the Marxian theory of social development? It seems Engels in his Anti-Dühring tried to make it so. Human volition, or moral effort, was by Engels traced back to the development of the classes. There are no eternal moral laws, but only those laws which are dictated by the interests of the class in power. All morality so far is class morality; "a really human morality, which transcends class antagonisms and their legacies in thought, becomes possible only at a stage of society which has not only overcome class contradictions, but has even forgotten them in practical life" <sup>x</sup> In chapter XI of Anti-Dühring Engels deals with the ~~false~~ inescapable problem of freedom

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<sup>x</sup> Engels, Anti-Dühring. Ch. IX. Eng. Tr. in Lewis S. ~~Feuer~~ Feuer, (ed) Marx & Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, Doubleday Anchor, 1959. p. 272



and necessity. Engels <sup>cites</sup> ~~quoting~~ with approval Hegel's view of freedom as the appreciation of necessity.

"Freedom does not consist in the dream of independence of natural laws," says Engels, "but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends".<sup>x</sup>

Freedom or human volition is thus a matter of "control over ourselves and over external nature which is founded on knowledge of natural necessity; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development."

For a Christian like the present writer, the parallelism <sup>seems</sup> ~~is~~ striking indeed, with certain ways of western Christian thinking about human freedom and God's will. Human freedom for these thinkers means primarily control over oneself and one's irrational impulses, and action in accordance with the will of God. In Engels' thought the notion of the will of God is replaced by the concept of natural or historical necessity. This parallelism is made more understandable by Joseph Dietzgen, a disciple of Feuerbach, who influenced many thinkers of his time, <sup>and</sup> who insisted<sup>x</sup> that "God, truth and nature are names for the same thing"

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3. Ani-Dubring ch XI. Eng. Tr. op. cit. p. 279.

xx. Dietzgen, Das Wesen der menschlichen Kopfarbeit, Hamburg, 1869, cited by George Lichtheim in Marxism, An Historical and Critical Study, New York, Praeger, 1961, p. 242

This relation between what takes place independently of human volition, and ~~the~~ what is the result of human will and action, remains the key problem in seeing the role of philosophy in changing society.

Marx was to the end reluctant to give full endorsement to Engels' view of historical necessity as deterministic ~~as~~ in the same way as the outcome of biological evolution is deterministic. Engels in fact came to regard historical development as part of natural or biological evolution, basically subject to the same laws. In his Dialectics of Nature, (Introduction), Engels waxed poetic in describing the process of nature as coming into being and going out of being as a matter of natural necessity. "It is an eternal cycle in which matter moves, ... in which every finite mode of existence of matter, whether it be sun or nebular vapour, single animal or genus of animals, chemical combination or dissociation, is equally transient, and wherein nothing is eternal but eternally changing, eternally moving matter and the laws according to which it moves and changes" <sup>x</sup>

These twin principles of the eternality of matter, and the permanence of change, being

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Karl Marx + Friedrich Engels, Selected Works II,  
Moscow, 1951, p 72.

already to the <sup>western</sup> Pre-Socratic view of life reality and is no original creation of Engels. The rigid determination of the so-called laws of Nature and the analysis of their dialectic character comes from Marx and Engels.

~~But is there a difference between Marx & Engels at this point?~~

I wonder if Marxist philosophers would accuse me of misinterpreting ~~Marxist~~ Dialectical Materialism if I characterized it in the following way

The universe is material. Its stuff is what contemporary science calls matter-energy. This universe is one inter-connected whole and is in a process of continuous change, change regulated by the <sup>three</sup> laws of dialectical materialism i.e.

- (1) the Law of the Mutual Interpenetration of Opposites
- (2) the Law of the Negation of the Negation, and
- (3) the Law of the Transformation of Quantity into Quality.

This change is set in motion by internal forces without any external intervention from a 'prime mover'. Human knowledge is also derived from objectively existing matter-energy, which being infinite can never be fully known. Human knowledge grows with time, especially as it is applied to practice and experience is gained. Thought has its roots in ~~the~~ man's biological apparatus which he shares with other living beings, but language is specifically human, and therefore historically and culturally conditioned. ~~I know this is against the views of Stalin~~

If what I have awkwardly summarised above constitutes an approximate general statement of the Dialectical Materialist position, my question is

under  
Marxism

What exactly is the role and function of ~~the~~ human volitional effort in the process of dialectical materialist change?

Human beings, by understanding themselves as an inter-connected part of the world in process of change, ~~can see~~ <sup>can see</sup> themselves both <sup>as</sup> subjects and objects of change.

The question of Causality is relevant here. But causality itself is inconceivable without a linear notion of time, for the cause has to precede the effect in time (unless one resorts to the scholastic notion of 'final cause'). Clearly we have as yet no objective ~~experience~~ or definition of time, but only agreed ones, in relation to agreed reference systems.

Is the Causal-Consequential Structure of the world an objectively given fact? We can observe it on the micro-scale of our own experience as creatures who are born and who die after some time. But on a wider canvas, where time-space unity is basic, Causality seems a difficult concept to sustain.

We will limit our discussion here only to <sup>the dialectic between</sup> human causality and natural necessity, on the shorter time-scale of our history. To what extent can we as human beings, by our voluntary action, alter the course of nature? That we do so seems quite obvious. When we build a dam or shoot a rocket, ~~we are~~ <sup>we may with</sup> doing something against natural necessity, but we are altering the course of nature, aren't we? Or are we? For it is only by working along the path of natural necessity that we can exploit the gravitational force

of a body of water, or over the ~~gravitational force~~ of a body like the rocket by shooting it with sufficient energy into orbit.

Are we changing nature when we build a city or construct a dam? Not if we regard human ~~acts~~ beings themselves as part of nature. If man is part of nature, then his actions are also the acts of nature, and the emergence of a megalopolis is not a violation of nature, but something that happens within nature according to its own laws and not an interference from outside, for there is nothing outside nature to intervene.

If this is basically true, we are still confronted with the question of man's choosing between alternative ways of dealing with his environment. Though man is part of nature, he transcends it precisely at the point at which he makes his own decisions independent of antecedent causes.

If Man is part of Nature, and if Nature is guided by 'inexorable laws', is Man also completely under the sway of the same laws? or is he under a different set of laws which 'nature' has set for him? Or, does he make his own laws as to how man should behave in relation to each other and in relation to nature? Would it be true to say that all

1. 1. actually true? That is, to

# Human Tragedy

Suffering is the constant companion of human existence. Obviously it is hard to measure. My own general impression is, however, is that its scope has increased in our time. The up-rootedness of human life is becoming more universal today than it ever was. Wars are more global in scope today. The catastrophic possibility ~~as a~~ of the dissolution of the whole planet with all life in it also has become <sup>rightly</sup> a real possibility in our time. In spite of our greatly increased humanitarian activities, ~~and the progress in~~ <sup>an ever more comprehensive</sup> medicine and care for the disabled and aged, we still have such vast proportions of human suffering to deal with as conquer yet.

~~It is too optimistic to hope that the world without war and without want which we hope to achieve in a foreseeable future, would also deal with all the other aspects of suffering, and thus come into a golden age of no suffering at all.~~  
It takes more optimism than facts allow to hope that

What then is God doing in our world by increasing the scope of suffering and tragedy in our world? There is the agony of the burden of freedom itself is a major cause of suffering. Our very efforts to relieve suffering <sup>our alienation</sup> gives entail voluntarily accepted suffering. What is God calling us to do in the midst of this suffering? Of course there is the imperative that springs directly out of the love of God, not only to relieve suffering, but also to share the suffering of men. But I wish here to speak of another aspect of suffering to which God is calling us. I will call this the "tragic mode of learning".

Learning is of the essence of human growth. And God's purpose is that the whole of mankind may grow into the mature manhood of Christ. That is why Education is God's most important concern. It is

of learning.

Eric Bentley in his discussion of George Bernard Shaw's *Comedies*<sup>\*</sup> makes the interesting point that the method of Comedy is clarification of ideas through the ironic exposure of pretensions, false or hollow ideas. Comedy as distinct from farce uses words to analyze truth. The inspired verbal commentary and dialectic which dissects and exposes falsehood, however, asks for no identification of the onlooker of the drama with the agents in it. We can watch it in detachment, and learn without pain.

The Tragedy on the other hand has its power in the learning that comes to the ~~Agent~~<sup>Actor</sup> through suffering, and to the onlooker through participation in the suffering of the actors. The essence of tragedy, I am told, is to affirm the dignity and significance of man in a world of suffering.<sup>xx</sup> This dignity is reflected in man's choice and his responsibility for the consequences of the choice. But it is not the individual man who chooses, in isolation from others. His choice and action are affected by other men and other forces, which have power over him. There are limitations on the agent's power, within himself, in his "boundedness" to others and in the forces of nature. And the function of tragedy is not to offer a solution to the problem of human limitation and suffering but to provide a clarification of the situation.

The tragedy, when it is ~~good~~ authentic drama, does not pose the issues of good and evil in black and white terms. The hero and the villain have both good and evil mixed in them in varying proportions. Of course there are the demonic forces, like Mephistopheles, the witches, Iago etc. But their demand is for the soul of man, for the surrender of basic humanity. ~~And~~<sup>But</sup> the triumph of the tragedy is not in the destruction of evil, but in the dignified refusal to surrender one's basic identity.

As Hegel so brilliantly pointed out, the tragic struggle is not between good and evil but between differing principles of right. It is unfair to oversimplify this as choosing the lesser evil. The tragic probe is always to clarify the conflict in real human life between rival principles of right, and <sup>to unveil</sup> the hard and by no means clear nature of the decisions we have to make in life.

Our scientific and academic approach to knowledge, discursive and analytical, detached in general, belongs to the Eonic pattern of learning and is an essential component of learning for maturity.

But the tragic mode of learning is the key to Christian Education. One is frightfully worried about the great desire to educate the church, through an unending stream of books, periodicals and mimeographed sheets, by the ~~sanctity~~ and virtuoso or amateurish performances of preachers for 20 minutes <sup>awell, taking advantage</sup> when ~~Christian mankind is most charitably disposed~~ of the time when the congregation puts on ~~its~~ <sup>a well</sup> most civil, manners and ~~by~~ those who think that including or excluding <sup>a subject called</sup> religious instruction in the <sup>School</sup> curriculum and the shape of that curriculum are the important keys to Christian Education.

If we are to serve the church and the world which in some ways is more mature, we have to cut through the moralistic oversimplification of issues and teach our people to learn by the tragic method, by the method of identification and involvement, of suffering with ~~the~~ and for the world, in order that we may learn wisdom. The moral uprootedness of our time is again God working to destroy our oversimplified concepts of good and evil.

As Michael Polanyi so convincingly asserts, our age is not an amoral age - It is rather an overmoralistic age. We are very much concerned about moral issues, the burning questions of value, but we have found ~~no~~ no acceptable system. Youth is deeply interested in morality



We have returned to a stoic conception of suffering. Suffering is to be relieved, but ourselves sharing in it. Our own suffering is to be heroically borne without showing it to others. But suffering is the raw material out of which love can be made and there needs to be discerned a new Christian attitude towards suffering.

to the world. This is the great goal of Christian education. For this it must use the tragic mode of learning, not merely the comic. By enhancing the scope of tragedy in our time, God is forcing us to restructure our ethical vision. In this we shall ourselves grow closer to the mature manhood of Christ, but we will have to grow with the whole of mankind.

I have ~~intentionally~~ <sup>unintentionally</sup> refrained from discussing the theological aspect of the question: "How does the Incarnate life of Jesus Christ affect unbaptized the life of unbaptized man in the world?" Limitations of time prevent me from doing it here. But we must get an image of humanity past, present and future as a single unit, the Great Adam, flowing through time, and of the presence of the Incarnate Christ in this Adam as a continuing phenomenon affecting the life of humankind in <sup>perceptible and</sup> imperceptible ways.

The Lordship of Christ should not be misunderstood in this connection as an arbitrary authority over the world. Our Lord's words to Pilate, the representative of the Roman Empire are significant: "My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews." (John 18:36). It is neither the law-and-order kingship nor the welfare state kingship. It is the kingship of suffering love. It is the kingship that lays down its life for the world. And we are kings too, but by participation in this kingship of suffering love.

The finality of Christ in the age of Universal History is a strange finality - the finality of the Cross and Resurrection - of life through death

X X X

Will the unbaptized man be saved? God wills that all men be saved Christ wills that all men be saved. And He wills as He ought to will. And His will is: ~~that~~ "when the hour of destiny strikes,

Our an community.

God has broken down many fences in our time, to throw us <sup>of nations,</sup> together. The Communications, media economic interdependence, the spread of education to the masses, and the levelling influence of a contagious urban-technological culture have brought us together across many national, <sup>racial,</sup> and class barriers.

The United Nations Organization and its allied agencies, in spite of their many setbacks and failures, have created the nucleus of a total human organization on a world-wide basis, something completely new in the history known history of the world.

Just as God has <sup>been & is increasing</sup> increased the scope of human freedom in its internal and external aspects, so also He is now working to increase the scope of human community. The spontaneous communities of the middle Ages in Europe as well as in other parts of the world were after all parochial communities. They have broken down. The urban-technological culture has ~~broken down~~ demolished the old barriers and has thrown us together into the Lonely Crowd. It is there that we have to rediscover community, and that not by going back to an agrarian-rural economy. God has placed us in front of a problem which frustrates us by its very magnitude. Here again God works in history to place a challenge before man which if he cannot solve even in part without truly developing and growing together in the very process of finding and executing that solution. ~~It~~

It may be possible for us at this point to seek many easy solutions - (1) to retreat into oneself and find a purely personal adjustment to the loneliness and meaninglessness of life - what some delight to call "acceptance of absurdity and living with it," or ~~again~~ (2) to ~~retreat~~ <sup>escape</sup> into pietism and find "a

inner consciousness by joining the whirl of social or public activity, or again <sup>to</sup> to seek a meaningful active vocation of service in which one almost uses other people as a means of giving significance to one's own life.

But none of these can create community - not even the fourth alternative which is most attractive to us as Christians. Some way has to be found at the ~~lowest~~ foundational levels of human association - in the family, in the school, in the local community, in the local church, in the factory and so on - to break down the walls that divide man from fellow-man. The forgiving, accepting, sustaining, secure love of God must become so richly and deeply a matter of personal and direct experience to each individual ~~in such a way that~~ <sup>is enabling to</sup> ~~he can~~ face himself as he is and open himself to others. This is the grass-roots level of community - ~~but also~~ the grass-roots level of genuine ecumenism. It is not simply Ecumenism does not simply require that the local Methodist and Lutheran congregations merge into one congregation, or are in a relationship of mutuality to each other. The unity of the church does not become a full reality until at the interpersonal level there is forgiveness and openness and mutual acceptance. This is something which has more meaning for the ordinary Christian than the merger of the denominations.

I am not suggesting that we should not do anything to bring the churches together until we have dealt with the interpersonal problems at the level of "where two or three are gathered together". My suggestion rather is that the <sup>small-group</sup> <sup>common</sup> community of openness in love and concern, in <sup>common</sup> worship and <sup>common</sup> service is a neglected area of our ecumenical work. The neglect of this level ~~can~~ is sure to leave an enormous gap in the full manifestation of the reality of Christ's unity, even when the problem has been solved at other levels. This is the last - the ~~which~~ - ~~not~~

is in a better position to start a contagion of openness than any other agency that God has in the world.

But we must at the same time keep in mind the genuinely ecumenical dimensions of the problem. If the whole oikoumene has to be involved in the new human community towards which God is beckoning us, we cannot be satisfied with merely working at the small intra-personal level. The power structures have to be reconciled to each other too. And here God does place before us several concerns.

(a) The West and the Rest East. I need not elaborate this area of concern, except to say that our faith must be equal to the risks involved in taking bold action at this point. Disarmament takes courage and faith and openness. Fear of ~~hiding~~ <sup>and his murderous weapons,</sup> the ~~and~~ other still hiding his true intentions, is inducing both sides to hide their hearts from each other. A break-through is necessary here. The charge of "Fellow-travelling" or in more modern lingo, of being a "Com-symp" is a frightening and tyrannical force in many parts of the world today, disrupting community both at a world-wide and at national and domestic levels. The Christian faith should be able to deliver us from our bondage to this tyranny. Christ was <sup>+</sup> the Master Fellow-traveller and we cannot afford to be less. He was + is the "all-symp", and we have to share in his universal sympathy. The World Council of Churches itself is hamstringed in its approach to Christians in the socialist countries by the fear of being tarred and lampooned as "Com-symp", even though the smear campaign has <sup>already</sup> started anyway. Neither can we afford to neglect one-fourth of humanity in our human community by keeping People's China out of the United Nations.

(b) The West and the Rest. I am not always

sure that we can blame God for taking the West into the rest of the world. Imagine ~~the~~ the year 1450 Europe is a pretty isolated place, ignorant of the rest of the world. And then suddenly it explodes. Discovery of America, Discovery of route around the Cape of Good Hope, the division of the world between Portugal and Spain as areas of colonization, the wars in Europe which ~~are spread~~ expand into the world, ~~and~~ ~~just~~ European world colonialism which lasted until about 15 years ago. I know some of my friends see God's hand in all this, but I see only the wrath of man praising God.

But Can we think that we have come to the end of Western dominance in the world today? now that political colonialism is practically liquidated? The true answer is no. And we cannot have a world-wide human community so long as that dominance lasts. Western man has slowly acquired the spirit of domination through the last 400 years. It will take him many generations to get rid of it. So he has a special responsibility to be careful; <sup>for</sup> even when he thinks he is serving, he may actually be dominating. I will say no more, for it is a very sore subject.

God has been working to enhance the scope of human community. But He is not going to do the whole work. He expects us to respond to His work. That is the splendor and the burden of human freedom.

~~I think~~ We have a need to think <sup>how the</sup> European Economic Community, the African regional federations, the Commonwealth and other regional or selective human communities can contribute to the final emergence of a genuinely world-wide community of

primacy of a freedom of choice; and secondly they usually speak of freedom as individual freedom. We need to see freedom as essential to the nature of God Himself, and reflected in <sup>human</sup> ~~man~~ as Image of God in the form of a seminal potentiality. When we speak of God's omnipotence, we are actually speaking of God's absolute freedom. Freedom is more than merely the possibility of choice, but the ~~only~~ the possibility of realization, of achievement. ~~If I am free~~

Let me try to speak in simple everyday language here. Am I free ~~to~~ be in India physically in the next five minutes? That of course is not a question of choice, but of power, of forces that prevent me from fulfilling what I desire, of agencies that I lack. God is free in that by the sheer act of willing He realizes His purposes. His <sup>freedom</sup> ~~power~~ is commensurate with His power. And when we speak of human freedom from a Christian standpoint we are not speaking of free-will as over against pre-destination, nor are we thinking of the freedom of choice of the individual.

The Reformation set man free from the shackles of traditional authority in the medieval European world. But this was basically an individual freedom, a freedom which later paved the way for Free Enterprise Capitalism and the Missionary <sup>and Expansion</sup> Revolts against the organized Protestant churches. The Reformation and its individualist Gospel <sup>of freedom</sup> ~~have~~ released forces whose mushrooming <sup>and full-out effect</sup> have begun to <sup>envelope</sup> ~~envelop~~ the whole world.

As Jacob Burckhardt puts it admirably:-  
In the Middle Ages both sides of human Consciousness - that which was turned within as that which was turned without - lay dreaming or half awake beneath a common veil. The veil was woven of faith, illusion, and childish prepossession, through which the world and history were seen clad in strange hues. Man was conscious of himself only as a ~~man~~ <sup>individual</sup>.

ions in this very process of discovering himself as an individual as over against other individuals, there is alienation both from the neighbor, and from nature. And the uncomfortable ness of this alienation has ~~been~~ filled western man with doubt and anxiety, and <sup>has ever since his liberation began</sup> ~~is today~~ driving him once again to new submissions to authority, new identifications with mass movements, new urges to compulsive and often irrational actions.

While the Reformation brought freedom, it has not been able to train man for the burden of freedom - that which <sup>we</sup> too lightly call responsibility. This training of man is the crying need of the day which God is imposing on us. We cannot ~~seek~~ <sup>afford merely</sup> to develop a few super-men who are able to handle their freedom with responsibility, while the others meekly accept their authority and surrender both their freedom and their responsibility. We need to develop the freedom of the totality of the human race.

So while we need to continue our fight for "the rights of man", <sup>for</sup> the freedoms of speech, of worship, of minorities, of association, of conscience, and of government, we have <sup>to expand the scope of our quest</sup> to reach for two different realms of freedom as well.

The first realm still deals with the freedom of the individual - namely freedom from internal constraints. But at the very point where the internal bondage breaks, the kingdom breaks in and community begins to emerge. This is not simply a question of believing in Jesus Christ for it was <sup>precisely</sup> to the believing Jews that Jesus <sup>the</sup> said these momentous words on Truth and Freedom

Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue to abide in my logos, you shall be truly my disciples, thus know the truth and the truth shall liberate you"

St John 8: 31-32.

The inner constraints are manifold and

God the Holy Trinity. We ought to be careful not to separate the Three Persons of the Triune God ~~too~~. We must resist the temptation to Christo-monism and to the assertion that the Holy Spirit alone is working outside the Church. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are working together

is in all things together. History is in a large measure the work of man. But man often works for his own personal, group or national interests, and not always for good. God who controls history takes the raw material of our decisions and actions and puts them together to work towards His over-all purposes for mankind.

gradually, but at a definitely stepped up tempo: History is outrunning our time-tables. The ~~Independence~~ in dependence of the African nations, the sudden advances in space travel research, and the breaking down of Confessional and national barriers in the Church and ~~the~~ in western Europe have all <sup>caught us by surprise</sup> ~~surprised us~~. We should be on the alert to ~~keep a watch~~ ~~watch~~ for His clandestine coming with eager expectation and yet with great patience, to watch for His clandestine coming into the ~~living~~ ~~men~~ life of mankind.

Human freedom. The question of freedom has often been posed in western Theology in the categories of Free will and Predestination. ~~St~~ Augustine started the debate in his De Civitate Dei, but never to the end of his life retracted his main position against free will, a fact almost ignored by medieval and post-Reformation Theology. (See Retractions I: xxiii). But the issue is hardly one of predestination and free will. ~~The issue is fundamental~~ The nature of freedom itself has to be explored. Freedom has been subdivided in many ways by many thinkers. ~~Augustine speaks of it as liberum arbitrium~~ But most of



and love, fear to upset established patterns in which we find our security, the compulsive drives of passion and hatred, envy and slander, bitterness and gossip, fear of exposure, fear of loss of power and so on. Here is the tremendous need of the world - western or ~~other~~ <sup>Eastern</sup>, Christian or non-Christian, educated or uneducated. And the break-through in this area of freedom must come from the Community of love, the Church, where "for ~~the~~ freedom Christ has set us free". This is a question of a genuine Christian Community of faith and forgiveness, of mutual acceptance and common worship and service. From the Church this freedom must spread to the world, just as the concept of service has broken loose from the Church and is spreading into the unbelieving world. There is so much to say here, but I can only find time to indicate the area.

The second realm is one which is already receiving world-wide attention. This is not freedom from, but freedom for. This is a question of considerable urgency especially in those nations which have recently become free from the colonial bondage. There remains the whole question of economic colonialism and I think, also intellectual and spiritual colonialism, which are highly loaded phrases likely to alienate the sympathy of many among you. But the positive aspect of the freedom of the new nations to be themselves can hardly be separated from these aspects of western domination. To find their own identity - <sup>it is for this that</sup> ~~this is what~~ the nations are striving. Emancipation is the first stage - from external domination of any kind; also from the uncritical ~~to~~ enslavement to the past. But the second stage is the slower and more laborious process of growing into full nationhood in a Community of nations, where no one dominates and all are free to be themselves in a relationship of mutuality to other nations, in an atmosphere of acceptance, forgiveness and celebration. The first stage is the first stage.

<sup>a</sup>  
~~The~~ whole series of questions: economic and technological development, the development of pluralistic but harmonious culture within each national unit which determines the fundamental aspect of the nation's personality, the changes ~~that~~ and adaptations that this calls for in the areas of education, pattern of government, and social systems.

To summarise the answer in the area of freedom, God has enhanced the scope of freedom for individual and social entities within the world-wide human society. He is working to face us with new freedoms to be won, and the Church should be there to work with men outside in the common quest of freedom — which is the power to be ~~take~~ one's own self in relation to other selves, and to grow by ~~the~~ mastering of power and its utilization for ~~good~~ ends.

II — Human Community —

(Paul Gregorios)

The relevance of the problem of God-Man-World relationship has not yet become obvious to many people. When one states that this is the central problem of any civilization the claim seems exaggerated and its justification gives the impression of being far-fetched.

But our civilization today is in such a crisis that only a <sup>fresh</sup> solution fetched from some what far down in our consciousness and in our racial memory can begin to show the way.

The way opened by Augustine was to seek the locus of certainty in the human consciousness and in the capacity of the human mind to grasp truth and to appropriate it. The intellectual is always faced with this problem. How does one get a sure foothold in the world of knowledge? How does one know for certain? How does one get hold of the truth and be sure that it is the truth?

Augustine was worried about this problem, especially in the light of the discussion among the Academics of his time:

"And there is another question, very knotty indeed and a source of great perplexity for the sharp-witted Academies, which I have not undertaken for solution here: Whether the wise man, for fear of falling into error by accepting the false for the true, ought to give his approval to anything - all things, as they affirm, being either hidden or uncertain. This doubt was the source of my writing three books at the very beginning of my conversion<sup>1</sup>, so that I might not be hindered at the very threshold of faith by this opposing doctrine. For, surely, I had to remove the hopelessness of discovering truth, a position apparently strengthened by their arguments. In their thinking, every error is considered a sin, and the one and only way of avoiding it, they contend, is by suspending agreement"<sup>2</sup>.

Augustine rejected this skeptical position of the Platonists of his time by a two-fold resolution.

First he took the fact that there is someone who doubts everything as an indubitable truth to which everyone could agree. If somebody says that "I do not know even whether I am alive", the fact that there is such an ignorant person who does not know is indubitable. In de beata vita<sup>3</sup>, in the soliloquies<sup>4</sup> and in the de Trinitate<sup>5</sup>, Augustine

1. Contra Academicos. P.L.32. Eng.Tr.Denis J.Kavanagh, Answer to skeptics in Writings of Saint Augustine. Vol. I. (Series Fathers of the Church). N.Y.1948 pp. 85-225.

2. Enchiridion (20). Eng. Tr. Bernard M.Peebles, Faith, Hope and Charity in Writings of Saint Augustine, Vol.4, in series Fathers of the Church, New York, 1947 p.387.

3. 2:1

4. 2:1:1

Augustine makes the point that to be conscious of one's own doubting is already evidence of the possibility of grasping one indubitable truth<sup>6</sup>. He makes the same point in de vera religione:<sup>73</sup>

"Every man who recognizes that he is doubting recognizes a truth, and he is certain of this fact which he recognizes; therefore he is certain of a truth. Therefore, every man who doubts whether truth exists carries in himself a truth why he should not doubt".

The second demarche of Augustine was to affirm that there are certain truths of faith to which to withhold assent is positively perilous. And faith means giving your agreement to certain propositions as true, according to Augustine. This definition of faith, which has consequences almost as disastrous as skepticism, was itself a creation of Augustine, understandable in the light of the skeptics' insistence that to accord assent to an uncertain proposition is error.

"And there are truths, even though they not be evident, which must be believed if we are to come to that happy life which cannot be other than eternal"<sup>7</sup>.

This second demarche which affirms faith as a way of giving assent to certain truths even before we have experimental certainty about them, was then made an essential preliminary to all understanding. "Believe, in order that you may understand" or in the Septuagint version of Isaiah 7:9, "unless you believe, you shall not understand"<sup>8</sup>. Belief is thus necessary for salvation and for the understanding of reality.

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6. The issue was intellectually important in Augustine's time. Plato's Academy had been revived in his time. The New Academy was distinct from the old Academy precisely in this new skepticism introduced by the Stoic Zeno of Elia - "that nothing could be known except what was true in such manner that it would be distinguished from the false by their marks of dissimilarity, and that conjecturing ought not to enter the mind of a wise man". Alypius cites this in Augustine's Contra Academicos: 14. The Academics could accept certain propositions as having high probability or verisimilitude, but not certain truth. In Augustine's spiritual and intellectual pilgrimage, the overcoming of this over-all skepticism was an important step.

7. Enchiridion: 20. E.T. op.cit pp. 387/388.

8. See De fide et symbolo: 1

It is in this sense that Augustine laid the foundation of two of the basic tendencies which came to fruition in the West in later times - individualism and intellectualism.

Augustine showed the way for Descartes. Augustine said - dubito, ergo sum (I doubt, therefore I am). Descartes, a millennium or more later, took his inspiration from this probably, to say cogito, ergo sum (I think, therefore I am). In both conceptions, the doubting individual or the thinking individual and his consciousness were made the locus of certainty, and in Descartes' case the starting point of a man-centred system of certitude.

Individualism in the West has many roots. One of the deepest of these roots is this Augustinian spirituality which assumed that the individual is capable of grasping the truth. It was in the context of the New Academy's paralyzing skepticism that Augustine, as an intellectual, had to search for certainty starting with the individual consciousness. But that intellectual act has made such a deep impression on the intellectual and cultural West, that when other factors sought to build up individualism, this ancient tradition lay ready to hand. Among the other factors one need mention here very briefly two: the misinterpretation of Dionysius the Areopagite in Western spirituality (especially the spirituality of the Low Countries), and the development of the principle of competitive greed in the market economy of capitalism.

Secondly, from his very struggle with the skepticism of the New Academy, Augustine made the intellectual ~~xx~~ decision that grasping truth was basically a matter of giving assent to propositions as true. This propositional view of truth continues to work havoc in Anglo-American philosophical schools even to this day. Certain schools of philosophy regard it as their main task to examine the truth content of propositional statements. Certain other schools of philosophy, following Augustine's original insight about the individual consciousness as the primary indubitable datum for philosophical analysis, have now begun to develop phenomenological systems based on Consciousness Analysis, a la Descartes and Husserl.

Thus Western intellectualism is still trapped in the twin elements of the individual consciousness as the basis and starting point of certainty, and the analysis, by mathematical logic, or ~~cybernetic~~ <sup>cybernetic</sup> ~~cybernetic~~ computation, of data given in the form of propositions and statistics which are regarded as the primary and indubitable basis of truth.

Yet, wisdom insists that unless we transcend our individual and local parochialisms and begin to think of the whole of humanity as a single multiplex unit, we have no hope of a future. It is also becoming clear that World Simulator Model computers cannot discover the way to that future. The vision of the way can come only from a fresh approach to the truth of the cosmos, grounded in a transcendent Reality of which mankind is both mediator and icon.

# Humanity, Nature and God

## Some Discussion Questions

- ① <sup>Nearly all</sup> ~~All~~ traditional forms of thought have dealt with three realities: God, humanity, and the world. Our secular civilisation has learned to think in terms of basically two realities - Man and the "external" world. There have been other precedents of binary thinking, but not just in terms of man and world as the two self-existent realities. The ancient Chinese system thinks in terms of Ying and Yang, but that is not the same as Man and world; nor is the ancient Hindu Sankhya system which thought in terms of Puruṣa (person) and Pralobhi (non-conscious nature). <sup>Questions</sup> ~~Pradhist~~ philosophy also manages without any <sup>specification</sup>.
- (a) What are the consequences of the modern binary thinking of self as <sup>knowing</sup> subject and the world as known object? (b) Is this binary conception essential to science and technology? Is it logically sustainable? (c) Is it sustainable from a Christian perspective?

(without God)

- 1) Even taking Reality as Man-world, it is still possible to hold to a unitary view or a binary view. The unitary view is expressed in Marxist <sup>materialist</sup> philosophy as well as in ~~a~~ modern idealist philosophies (e.g. Hegel); but modern pragmatism, which may lie behind
- may be unreflectively

has now emerged in the West as the inclusive vs exclusive view of nature; i.e. nature as including or excluding humanity. Can this debate be resolved by science itself? Whose job is it to resolve this debate? of environmentalist alone? What can theology and the philosophy of science contribute to this debate?

3) Science <sup>claims to make</sup> ~~makes~~ no assumptions about origin of matter-energy or about the ground of existence as such. Do scientists, however, often unreflectively assume that the world and man existed and evolved by some autonomous principle and process? Does science promote an ethos of ~~being~~ where people assume that existence as well as evolution of that which exists can be explained without reference to anything "outside" or "underneath" existence and evolution? Do scientists with a Christian faith manage to find an intellectually satisfactory meaning ~~of~~ for the doctrine of creation and the creator-creation relationship?

4) Christian theology sometimes makes the claim that nature is also to participate in and benefit from the redemption

Scriptural passages like Romans 8, and the teaching about the cosmic Christ in the Epistles to Colossians and Ephesians. Can this doctrine be re-interpreted in a manner that does justice to the scientific-technological enterprise of humanity and in relation to the current ecological crisis?

5) How do other religions and ideologies interpret reality? Has western Christianity and western secular thought to learn something from these sources? The claim has often been made that the cosmology of East Asian religions (Taoism, Buddhism and Hinduism, ~~for~~ primarily) and of primal cultures and ancient civilizations, would be more consistent with reality as understood in modern science, than the West Asian cosmology of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, which tend to emphasize the distinction and difference between God, Man and World, rather than their unity and inter-relatedness. To what extent can this claim be documented?

6) Is there a difference in <sup>concerning</sup> ~~seeing~~ the relationship between God, humanity and the universe, between  
1. - Eastern and Western traditions in





In fact it seeks ~~and~~ to understand the whole of reality as composed of "moving matter in its manifold forms, eternal in time, infinite in space, .. in constant law-governed self-development" (S. T. Melukhin, in "The Dialectical-Materialist Conception of Matter", in Philosophy in the USSR, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 43). The same author speaks of "the absoluteness, the substantiality and eternal existence of matter" subject to which follows certain universal laws and is organized as systems of varying levels of complexity, which are themselves interconnected, and constantly undergoing transformation, in accordance with the universal dialectical laws.

How can this way of perceiving reality come into dialogue with the Christian understanding of God, Humanity and Cosmos?

*As a theological contribution to the Co-ordinated Studies on Man, Father Paul Verghese of Kottayam, India, has sent us the following reflections. They comment on the two approaches to Christian anthropology taken by St. Augustine, on the one hand, and by St. Gregory of Nyssa, on the other, in the light of our contemporary situation.*

## **HUMANIZATION AS A WORLD PROBLEM**

by Father Paul Verghese

It was a comparatively noiseless break-through that the World Council of Churches made recently in organizing a world level dialogue between Christians and Marxists. The break-through was not in any agreement reached between Christians and Marxists, but in the fact that such dialogue moved from the realm of possibility to reality.

The Christian side had formulated the theme, in our usual clumsy and unclear manner, as "Trends in Christian and Marxist thinking about the Humanization of Technical and Economic Development". Very early the objection was made about the theme — Is humanization something to be brought in from the outside to bear upon something else which is inhuman called "Technical and Economic Development"? Certainly not. Development, whether technical and economic, or cultural and spiritual, is itself a major element in humanization.

That gives rise to the question: What is humanization? It is an -ation word derived from the adjectival form of man, it means making men human. How can we give any positive content to the notion of humanization without knowing who man is? If you say that he is simply a biological species, then you have no problem of humanization — since the species is already there. But precisely because man finds himself confronted with the need for humanization, it is clear that man is not yet man.

And in order that man truly becomes human, we need to have a basic orientation, if not a model of what man should be, at least a tentative contour of what man is and has to be.

Here some Marxists are anxious to talk to intelligent Christians. The more creative Marxist intellectuals are becoming convinced that dogmatic Marxism (no more than dogmatic Christianity) cannot answer the question: "What is Man?" in a manner that will be useful even for the immediate future.

The question about the nature of man appears also to be the central thrust of the dialogue which is now breaking out everywhere — among western Christians whether Protestant or Catholic, between Western Christianity and Eastern Christianity, between Christians and secular men, between Christians and Marxists, and between Christians and adherents of other religions. But dogmatic Christianity too does not seem to have an adequate answer to the question: "What is Man?".

## The Question and its Parts

The question about what man is refers both to his finitude and to his transcendence. It is for this reason that the question seems so hard to tackle. It has both a phenomenological and an ontological aspect.

Immanuel Kant, the intellectual father of the modern era, once said that true universal philosophy is concerned with four fundamental questions :

1. What can I know ?
2. What ought I to do ?
3. What may I hope for ?
4. What is man ?

In his *handbook* (to his lectures on logic), he suggested that the first question is the concern of metaphysics, the second the realm of ethics, the third that of religion and the fourth that of anthropology<sup>1</sup>.

Kant's whole philosophical enterprise was an attempt to answer these questions. He thought that the fourth question : "What is Man ?" is the inclusive question, and that the other three simply seek to mark out some of the limitations of man in his finitude. Martin Buber, in his inaugural lectures as Professor of social philosophy at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem (1938) accused Kant, however, of not having tackled the question "What is Man ?" because of the indefinite scope of the question.

Heidegger also criticizes Kant for not having dealt with the fundamental question about the being of Man<sup>2</sup>. His own project is to seek an answer to the question of fundamental anthropology through the method of fundamental ontology.

But the scope of the question is more than staggering — it is almost paralysing. As Malebranche put it :

"Of all human knowledge, the knowledge of Man is the most deserving of his study. Yet this knowledge is not the most cultivated or the most developed which we possess. The generality of men neglect it completely. And even among those who busy themselves with this knowledge there are very few who dedicate themselves to it — and still fewer who successfully dedicate themselves to it<sup>3</sup>."

The effort to subdivide the question into its constituent parts itself involves the begging of some questions. If we say that the three subsidiary questions<sup>4</sup> are, as Kant proposed, what can I know, what ought I to do and what may I hope for, this implies that Man is to be understood primarily as a knower, doer, and hoper. That he is all three, and that these three constitute a major part of his existence, cannot be doubted. But are these his constitutive features ? Or can these three, his knowing, doing, and hoping, be better understood as instrumental to something else — namely man's search for his own being, which is more than simply knowing, doing, and hoping ?

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Martin Buber in *Between Man and Man*, Fontana 1961, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, Eng. Tr. James S. Churchill, Indiana University Press, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Buber, *op. cit.* p. 149.

## **The Question of Methodology and Criteria**

This raises immediately the problem of the method by which we seek to answer the question : "What is Man ?", and of the criteria by which proffered answers are to be tested. Shall we take a "history of ideas" approach, and root our ideas solidly in the past, or shall we take a phenomenological analysis of the *Dasein* of contemporary existence, or again shall we be boldly speculative and use our freedom to envision the future of mankind by our own discerning choice ?

Whichever way we choose, there cannot be an external authority or criterion by which we can fully validate our choice. We cannot be exhaustive in our analysis of the past of man's ideas about himself, and even if we were, we would be confronted with the need to choose between varying positions taken in the past. There is nothing authoritative about the past that can be fully normative for the present and the future. Besides, if the analysis of the past is not related to the present and the future, what use is it ?

Neither is there any guarantee that any phenomenological analysis of man in his present existence can be absolutely free from cultural pre-suppositions. Here is the fundamental difficulty of Husserl's phenomenological method. The word obtained by the analysis of Sartre's consciousness need not be identical with the world which a Japanese Zen Buddhist may have in his consciousness. And no criterion exists to arbitrate between the two. Both consciousnesses are the consequences of particular collective and individual histories, and are coloured also by different systems of education, different personal and cultural fears and inhibitions etc.

It does not seem possible, however, to envisage the future without being partly conditioned by the past and the present. No man is totally free from the formative power of personal and cultural history, even when he claims to be so. One speaks therefore about the future of Man, fully aware that one is so conditioned. The authenticity of the vision can be tested only by the degree to which it commends itself to others.

Let me therefore, from the outset make it clear that I speak with no authority, but simply as one whose cultural and personal history includes the South-East Asian world which gave birth to Hinduism and Buddhism, a spiritual rootage in Eastern Orthodox Christianity, and the brainwashing of a western Education, as well as a somewhat unique personal history which creates its own inhibitions and aspirations.

## **Two Christian Approaches to Anthropology**

We shall take here, in order to provide some rootage in the past, just two ancient Christian attempts to draw the contour of man. These men are chosen both because of their great influence on Christianity and human culture, and because of the interesting contrast between them which places us before certain choices. They are St. Augustine of Hippo and St. Gregory of Nyssa.

Augustine found the question of the Psalmist an existential one for himself — "What is Man, that thou art mindful of him !". Since his own concern is with existential self-understanding he rephrases the question in the first person :

*Quid ergo sum, Deus meus? quae natura mea?*, "So what am I, my God, what is my nature?" Precisely because he could not understand man as something given, a normal part of the scheme of things, he had no method of answering that question, except by addressing it to God Himself.

And what answer did he find? His own personal pre-occupation from his very youth was with the problem of evil, evil in the world, evil in the self. That was the central question in that disintegrating world of fourth-century Rome. And in answering the question about the nature of man, he answered also his prior question about the origin of evil.

His first love, Manicheism, had sought to find the source of evil in a permanent principle of evil — in an eternal evil God opposed to the good God. In his earlier works as a Christian to combat this is his main pre-occupation — to affirm the sovereignty of the good God by denying a second eternal God. And he argues — if this latter God, the God of evil, is capable only of evil, then he is not God, for God is free. He thus denies an unoriginate eternal principle of evil, and locates the origin of evil in the freedom of the will in the created order<sup>1</sup>.

In his controversy with Pelagius and his disciples, however, Augustine had to withdraw much of what he said about free-will, for his anti-Manichean writings had been used by the Pelagians to argue against Augustine's own doctrine of Grace. And so in his *Retractions* (I : IX) he withdraws much of what he had earlier said about free-will. It is this circumstance that made him reduce freedom to a neutral, medium kind of good and not central to man's nature.

But evil itself Augustine regarded as central to man's nature. For he had fought hard against the evil of concupiscence in his own soul, only to find himself getting more deeply involved in it. So he traces the origin of evil to the free-will, making evil an integral part of man — of *natura mea*, and thus of human nature itself.

Humanity is thus a *massa damnata*, revoltingly vile, man being mis-oriented in his very reason by his passions. Desire precedes thought. The will goes before the mind, deflecting and distorting it. *Partum mentis praecedit appetitus*. It is your love which can decide whether your mind is on the right track or not. There are two fundamental choices for love — Jerusalem, the city of God, or Babylon, the city of the earth. The *natura mea* inclines me always to Babylon, the worldly city. Only the Grace of God can lift my love up to Jerusalem.

"My weight is my love, thereby I am borne, whithersoever I am borne. We are inflamed ; by Thy gift (grace) we are enkindled ; and are carried upwards ; we glow inwardly, and go forwards... We go upwards to the peace of Jerusalem."

Augustine thus dramatized what is a Biblical insight in St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians :

"The desires of the flesh are against the spirit, and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would."

*Gal. 5:17.*

<sup>1</sup> Augustine's view of the origin of evil is a faithful summary of what the Cappadocian fathers taught.

And yet in that dramatization, he was laying the foundations of a doctrine which has become deeply entrenched in western Christianity as well as in western culture, that evil or sin is an integral part of human nature. This ontologization of what was but a phenomenological observation in St. Paul, has plagued western Christianity ever since. For St. Paul, sin is not a part of man in his created essence, but rather an enemy that has entered into humanity from the outside, through the disobedience of the first Adam. Of course, Augustine would agree with that. Yet he saw fallen human nature as decisively normative for his understanding of man. In Augustine, nature is the result of the Fall — not of creation.

In western Christian anthropology, the distinctive thing about man is that he is a sinner by nature. Nothing good can come from him by nature. Only grace can produce the first movements towards the good. By nature he is not free. Grace coming from outside humanity, outside nature liberates him to will the good and thus restores to him the limited freedom of being able to do good.

One feels embarrassed by the degree of presumption that is required to engage in fundamental criticism of such a towering genius of humanity as Augustine. And yet, without exercising that freedom, one becomes paralyzed by the overpowering authority of obvious error. So the following criticisms of Augustine are proffered in the interests of starting a discussion between East and West within the Christian Church which has been long overdue. Here they are in the form of five theses:

- 1) The opposition between Jerusalem, the city of God and Babylon, the city of earth, has been posed by Augustine too undialectically to permit its remaining faithful to the Biblical tradition. A false opposition is created here between this world and the world to come. The world to come has, according to the Biblical view, come into this world in Jesus Christ, pervades it and grows within it, transforming it from within. By failing to recognize this dialectical tension, and by making the two realms disjunctive, Augustine has unwillingly laid the foundation for the unfortunate choice between world-affirmation and world-denial in western intellectual and cultural life. Overcoming this disjunction is of primary significance to a relevant anthropology today.
- 2) By making human nature totally devoid of the good and conceiving grace as something supernatural entering nature from the outside, Augustine has been unwittingly responsible for the Christian Church's false claims to exclusive possession of the good, and the despising of other religions and cultures — which still remains a fundamental problem of western culture. By conceiving man's essential nature to be sinful it has been unable to have a positive evaluation of man's destiny as *man* — secular or religious — in the material creation, to accept man as at least in part free to shape his own nature and destiny in this world. The opposition between nature and grace continues to plague western theology, even in a new theologian like Karl Rahner.
- 3) By making sin the central problem of man, western Christianity has been caught in the trap of being concerned primarily with the salvation of the individual to the neglect of his corporate vocation to be the bearer of God's name in history. It has thus been pre-occupied with the problems of forgiveness of sins and justification by faith, which are both preliminary to the true

vocation of man to be transformed into the image of God, transforming his environment in that process. Deliverance from sin is not enough. The vocation to shape the world belongs integrally to the Christian message.

- 4) By focusing on the salvation of the individual from sin, Augustine laid the foundation for thinking of the Church as a collection of saved individuals, rather than as the corporate body of Christ by participation in which the individual man experiences not only forgiveness of sins, but also access into the presence of God. A relevant Christian anthropology today has to grant primacy to man's corporate existence and the structures of society, and only in that context view the problems of personal existence.
- 5) By thinking of the sacraments mainly in terms of a *verbum visibile* and as a vehicle of grace to the individual. Augustine made possible the obscuration of the Eucharist as the central act of the Church with a double movement — the corporate self-giving of the Church to her Lord in loving adoration, and the self-giving of the Lord to the Church in the Body and the Blood. The recovery of an authentic sacramental practice in the Church is necessary to revalidate matter in Christian thought, and thus to train Christians to take the incarnation and this world seriously.

Western anthropology finds itself caught in the terms of these Augustinian deviations, even in their denial of them. Correctives are to be sought outside the western tradition, since new alternatives have to be posed to come to grips with man in his complex reality. Ecumenical discussion should soon pay attention to this aspect.

One such corrective can come from Augustine's contemporary, St. Gregory of Nyssa, from whom Augustine seems to have derived many of his ideas, though not directly but through Jerome, Ruffinus and Ambrose. I shall here refer to seven points of Nyssa's anthropology in the form of succinct theses.

- 1) Man is an integral part of creation, and cannot be understood or saved in isolation from the rest of creation. The creation was made for man and finds its fulfilment in him.
- 2) Man is distinguished from the rest of creation by his "ruling power" over the rest of creation. Man is thus born to be Lord of Creation — this is his nature as the image of God. Tool-making is an essential aspect of the Lordship of man, and this is why he is born weak and defenseless, but has to acquire his tools and weapons by subduing animals and metals.
- 3) Man's mind, which rules over him (the *hegemonikon*) works through the senses, which in turn operate through the body, and therefore the three are inseparable, and all three (mind, body and sense) are to be saved as integral parts of man.
- 4) Man is created in the image of God. His nature is therefore to be like God, participant in all good. Sin is extrinsic to his nature, an accretion from the outside. His nature is participation in all possible good. There is no limit to his potentiality for good.
- 5) The basis for participation in all good is freedom from necessity, for that which is not free is not virtue. Man's nature has therefore to be freely achieved, by creative activity and not simply by passively being moulded, or by grace infused from outside.



- 6) The basic distinction between God and Man is that God is unoriginate, while Man is created. God is beyond time, not subject to change as time-creatures are. Man is originate, and in time, and therefore has constantly to change — i.e. he is a historical being, in the flux of change, always at the point of intersection between a past and a future.
- 7) Man in his fundamental essence is corporate, the body is the principle of individuation. His vocation therefore is to be a corporate body — the body of Christ. Perfection itself belongs to mankind as a whole in the final recapitulation, when evil shall cease to exist even at the pragmatic level.

The subtlety of St. Gregory of Nyssa's anthropology can be grasped only by apprehending his analysis of the Creation, Man, and the God-Man Christ Jesus in their various relations to God.

God is Freedom. That is what the transcendence of God ultimately means. He transcends all determinations, physical, psychological, moral or conceptual. He is free also in His immanent relations to the cosmos and to Man.

The world is no emanation from God. It is created, i.e. the principles (*aphormas*), the causes (*aitias*) and the forces (*dunameis*) of all that exists are set in motion by God's will. The creation is thus the realization, or concretization of God's will. "The will of God is, so to speak, the matter, the form and the energy of the universe, and everything in the universe is subject to it." This, according to Nyssa, is the Christian understanding of God's immanence in creation. Not that God's being is in the cosmos (pantheism), not that the universe is in the being of God (pan-en-theism), but rather that God's will has become the cosmos. And therefore while we can speak of God's immanence in creation through His will, precisely because the will of God is the being of the universe, the universe itself is transcendent and free, beyond our conceptual determinations. The universe is thus dynamic being. It is God's decision, will and purpose that gives it motion. The immanence of God thus serves both as the principle of cohesion and as the motor of evolution.

The cosmos is the dynamic concretion of the will of God and man is an integral part of this cosmos. But man is more than that. He is participant in the very *phusis* or dynamic nature, of God. God's grace is ultimately, His choice to make man participate in His nature. The two creations — the creation of the universe, and the creation of man — are both acts of God's grace. It is this double grace — the grace of simple creation by will and of the second creation after his own image, — that constitutes our being as body and soul. Grace is thus not opposed to nature, but is the constituent of nature.

The mind, or spirit, or *nous*, creative mental activity, constitutes the difference between the rest of creation and man. In man God's transcendent and free immanence becomes present in a special way. And since this is the essence of man, human nature cannot be conceptually determined. It breaks out of all confining limits except that of creaturehood, for even historical existence is one day to be transcended.

This transcendent divine immanence in man is neither static nor self-evident. It is a free, dynamic presence, and is realized by man to the extent to which the soul or the constructive essence of man, becomes transparent to the reality of itself.

God's freedom functions in the cosmos as an immanence of which the universe is not consciously aware. In man there is the possibility of his being consciously aware of the Divine presence in him. In the God-Man Jesus Christ, the awareness of man's self-identity as the Divine immanence became fully transparent to the Divine transcendence of the Father, and this is the reality of being the image of God — the transparence of the image to its proto-type. It is in this transparent stance that the transfiguration of man takes place — as St. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3: 12-18.

Man thus, according to Nyssa, is an earth-born organism destined to become transparent to the reality of the transcendent God and to transform the creation by his free creativity to become the bearer of the Good.

## **Transition to our Time**

But what indeed does all this have to do with the issues confronting man today? Where is the transition from this abstract ontological analysis to contemporary problems? Perhaps the best exponent of Patristic thought in relation to current problems is that great western Christian genius Père Teilhard de Chardin. His thought seems to be in direct continuity more with Nyssa than with Augustine.

The idea that plays a central role in Teilhard's thought is that of "hominization" or humanization and cosmogenesis or planetization. There are two fundamental faith-affirmations which underlie this vision of history as humanization and cosmogenesis.

- 1) Evolution is infallible; it cannot miscarry; it must go through to the end of what it has set out to achieve, despite many failures along the way. Industrialization is the consequence of evolution.
- 2) This end already exists — as point Omega, a personal centre able to sum up all consciousness within itself, and finally to unify the human super-organism.

The whole of the history of creation forms one single movement forward of God's dynamic will immanent in the universe, according to Teilhard. Consciousness, which becomes most manifest in Man, goes back to matter itself for its origin. All sciences deal with aspects of this movement forward — Astronomy, Palaeontology and Geology dealing with the history of material creation, Biology with the history of life, World history with the dealings of men with each other and with their environment, and Church history or holy history dealing with the transcendent God's breaking into man through Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

The question then is about the orientation or direction of the whole process, and particularly about the goals for man. Point Omega as a goal does not suffice to orient, without greater amplification.

Teilhard finds the orientation by an analysis of the process of movement. He finds a dialectic in the total process between death and life, between the tangential or external energy which governs the physical and chemical relations of the elements to each other on the one hand, and radial or internal energy, which is really psychic energy drawing every group of life forward towards greater complexity and centrality. The physico-chemical movement is subject to Carnot's second law — the increase of entropy, the running down of the universe, the drift to death and non-being. The psychic energy of consciousness overcomes

this tendency to death by the creation of life, which by greater complexity of organization and by being more centred, is able to make the particles of matter function in such a way as to move forward to hominization or cosmogenesis.

Thus, according to Teilhard, there is in the stuff of the universe, and not merely in man, a growing force of desire and invention, very feeble and unsure at first, but growing in intensity as time progresses. This then becomes life, "something that arranges, converges, becomes concentrated, interiorized, develops corpuscles" through something else that "disarranges, diverges, expands, and loses its corpuscles". It is this process which we call evolution.

The appearance of Man in this evolutionary continuum creates a new situation, precisely because of the existence of *nous* or human consciousness. It is no longer the body that evolves, but the sphere of the mind — the noösphere. The fundamental direction is the same — namely increasing complexity and centricity. The region and the technique of evolution has now radically shifted.

The new fact is that it is no longer the body that evolves, but the human mind, moving forward towards more complexity. Complexity means not merely greater diversity, but also a multivariety of levels and currents of relationship. Centricity means a more centred and therefore more wide-embracing and more consciously directed process of human development. It is no longer simply the original impulse within creation that directs the universe towards its fulfilment centred in point Omega. A part of the stream of evolution, namely human consciousness, becomes capable, not only of comprehending the process that gave birth to it, but also of directing it towards freely chosen goals. "God makes things make themselves", says Teilhard.

It is in fact no longer evolution, giving rise to a multiplicity of forms of life. A new process has begun with man — namely that of involution. Man finds himself confronted not only with the task of liberating himself from the evolutionary stream that carries him forward through the double process of expansion in diversity of species and concentration or selectivity in survival. He is also called upon to gather up the multifarious universe and bring it under centred and directed control.

Man is no longer the plaything of the reproductive urge which produces indiscriminately and the fact of death which eliminates the unfit. He assumes control of the mainstream of evolution by being able to transcend it and transform it. Science and technology thus become the instruments of salvation. Economics and Politics become part of the activity of increasing the centred complexity of a pluralistic world. Human creativity goes forward through not only science and technology, but also through the production and distribution of new goods, and the organization of power in society.

Human culture itself is influenced by this process. Changes in the pattern of production and distribution and in the organization of power radically alter the way of life, thought and action of men — their attitudes and aspirations included.

Thus Teilhard becomes the exponent of a new way of looking at life or existence. History is now unified into one vision that comprehends the history of the universe and the earth (palaeontology, geology), the history of matter (the physico-chemical sciences), the history of life (biology) and the history of man (history, including science and technology, politics and economics as well as culture).

History thus becomes the magnificent all-pervading movement of all existence in its proud though painful march towards fulfilment, and here in this process is where modern man seeks his own fulfilment or salvation. As Montuclard says :

"Modern man is convinced that history has a liberating part to play as regards humanity. To him, history is the mediatrix of salvation. And if he has no religious faith, he carries this conviction to the lengths of believing that it is up to history alone — that is to say, for human effort inserted in the historical process — to secure for men, through justice, freedom and solidarity, the deliverance that they seek..."

There are in some men a faith, a hope, a sense of the future, and at times an overwhelming vision of the historical situation from which they can draw self-control, freedom of thought and action, courage and initiatives. What did they have to do, in order thus to be "saved" ? No more than enter actively into the current of history<sup>1</sup>."

It is this hope and trust in history and in the human effort to be inserted in human history, that constitutes the common ground for many Christians, secular humanists, and Marxist humanists. It is on this basis that they seem willing to enter into a dialogue about the humanization of the world.

## Several Questions

The Christian is tempted to ask a few questions to himself at this point :

- 1) What is the ground of this great hope in history ? Does history itself provide the ground for such hope ? Has not history betrayed men in the past ?
- 2) Does this hope not create the false idol of a utopia on earth which man can create by his own effort ? Does not the Christian faith preclude the vision of such a paradise on earth in history ?
- 3) Does this hope not eliminate the need for any specific faith in God, and therefore make the Church and its message totally irrelevant ?
- 4) Where does God fit in all this ? If man can achieve the kingdom by his own efforts, does this not make God unnecessary and obsolete ?
- 5) Is this all not too optimistic ? Why is there no realistic appraisal of the fact of sin or evil which also exists in this evolutionary history ? How did it originate ? What is the function ? How can it be overcome ?

We may have to go beyond Teilhard in seeking to answer some of these questions. But in some cases Teilhard himself has pointed the way forward.

## 1. The Ground of Hope

Christians ought to reflect on the fact that the Christian hope is not for Christians alone. The redemption in Jesus Christ is a cosmic one, and it is sheer pettiness on our part if we deny its fruit to non-Christians.

<sup>1</sup> From "La Médiation de l'Eglise et la médiation de l'histoire", in *Jeunesse de l'Eglise*, fasc. 7 entitled *Délivrance de l'homme*, quoted in Olivier Rabut, *Dialogue with Teilhard de Chardin*, p. 169.

Of course, history does not provide a great basis for hope. It is the Christian hope which enables Teilhard to see hope in the direction of evolution. It is the Jewish Old Testament hope that enables a Marxist like Ernst Bloch to live by the Principles of Hope<sup>1</sup>, which is a fundamental Messianic principle. But history itself validates Bloch's own marvellous summary of his philosophy as Harvey Cox narrates it to us — "S is not yet P". At least the "not-yetness" of Man is something of which most men are directly convinced, even those who are comfortably *bourgeois* and hug that *status quo* in the name of "law and order". Being is in motion — towards fulfilment or destruction we cannot be sure from history, but history does not succeed completely in laughing at all assumption of directedness in history. Man is a future-seeking being, whether in this world or in another. Possibility, the New, Futurity, these are categories within which to conceive the "not-yet being" of man. To use the pompous words of the Second Vatican Council :

"This sacred Council proclaims the highest destiny of Man and champions the God-like seed which has been sown in him."

Whether history provides us with an adequate ground for this hope, it is the Christian's responsibility to stand behind secular man's hope, for he, like us, is created in the image of God and is destined to be like God. Even if secular man has nothing but the *fact* of his hope as the *basis* of his hope, we must hope with him for the sake of man.

## 2. Secular Hope and Utopia

Western theology has been bitten by the deep disillusionment of speculative philosophy and secular liberalism. It has seen the depths of evil in man in the pogroms and the concentration camps of our century. It is naturally wary of an optimistic estimate of the future or of man.

Secular utopias are also now becoming transformed. The kind of static utopia that Dostoevsky's underground man cynically sought to overthrow no longer exists in the minds of perceptive secular thinkers. "A revolution in human relations and a turn-about in man himself are therefore the goals of socialism, not the build-up of the productive forces", says a modern Marxist from Yugoslavia<sup>2</sup>.

The socialists are now laughing at us Christians for being concerned only with salvation in the next world, and therefore becoming supporters of the *status quo* of oppression and injustice on earth. They say the utopia is a Christian creation. Socialists are now pursuing more modest goals. As Professor Pejovic says :

"If the goal of history is understood to be not salvation, but rather a freer and more sensible life on this planet, then philosophy has the task envisaged by Marx, viz. to be sensible (and not calculating) and capable of helping people to live more sensibly and of leading them to freedom<sup>3</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1959.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Danilo Pejovic, 'On the Power and Impotence of Philosophy' in Erich Fromm, Ed. *Socialist Humanism*, Doubleday Anchor, 1966, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 109.

And even when other Marxists like Professor Maximilien Rubel insist that "Utopia and Revolution are the two historical co-ordinates of the socialist movement"<sup>1</sup>, they mean that we must will the abolition of an unjust society (revolution) and the creation of a just society — the New City which itself is not static or perfect. That seems to have been the content of the prophetic message — judgment and hope.

### 3. What about Faith in God ?

There we have a more radical problem. If we allow men to go on building up secular hopes not grounded in faith in God, are we not betraying God ? In fact, does Teilhard himself give room for a purely secular hope which eliminates any need for faith in God ?

If Olivier Rabut's two-point summary of Teilhard's basic understanding of God's purpose as unilinear from the beginning of the universe to its end in point Omega is correct, then it is possible that faith need not be in God, but only in the process of history.

"1) Evolution is infallible, it cannot miscarry, it must go through to the end of what it has set out to do. It is written within its very law that it will end up at a definite point — the point at which mankind is unified in *one* higher person. Everything necessary to achieve this end, is therefore already in existence.

2) The end would not be achieved did there not already exist a personal centre able to sum up all consciousness within itself, and finally to unify the human super-organism."<sup>2</sup>

These, as we have stated earlier, are Christian affirmations, about the purpose of God in Jesus Christ. Their antecedents are not in Marx and Lenin, but in the doctrine of the recapitulation of all things in Christ as taught by St. Paul, St. Irenaeus and St. Gregory of Nyssa.

If secular man wants to secularize these faith-affirmations and hold them as secular affirmations, as Montuclard suggests, should we deny him this privilege ? Perhaps secularized man's own faith will become more articulate when he sees Christians working side by side with him for the emancipation of man and his unification.

We should be prepared to welcome secular man's faith in the historical process as a pre-figuration of his faith in God.

### 4. Why God at all ?

That leads to the fourth question : does all this not mean that the belief in God is something dispensable for man, and that Christians themselves would be freer to help man become man if they would free themselves from this juvenile dependence on God ? Is not then the Gospel of Christian atheism of Altizer and Hamilton, the most sensible of gospels that the Christian can still hold to ?

<sup>1</sup> "Reflections on Utopia and Revolution" in *op. cit.* pp. 210-219.

<sup>2</sup> Rabut, *Dialogue with Teilhard de Chardin*, pp. 115-116.

Not necessarily. First of all let us make clear that God is not scared by the possibility of men denying him. He gives us every possible opportunity to do so, because he respects man's freedom. And when we proclaim that "God is dead", God says to us : "That is alright ; so long as you do not say, 'Man is dead' ". For ultimately, in affirming Man, the image of God, we are affirming its proto-type.

God is not jealous about man's achieving the kingdom by his own efforts. After all, all the good efforts of man are nothing but the efforts of God, for it is God who acts in us. God has become man. Let man act for the good of his fellowman, and that will be the God-man acting.

As for conscious faith in God, we who do believe in God, even if it is unfashionable, need the chastening fire of a fighting atheism both within and without the Church to bring purity and clarity to our faith.

God dwells in light unapproachable. He dwells also in the very being of man. And when man grows into goodness, the face of God appears on the faces of men, both individually and corporately.

Let us not be too keen to defend God. Our defense only makes him look weak and ridiculous. Give yourself to Man — and slowly you will discover that you do believe in God.

By making God *necessary*, we do no service to God.

## 5. Why no Mention of Sin and Evil ?

Yes, evil is there, for all of us to see. It does not go away with our closing the eyes.

Teilhard is not unaware of the problem of evil. Neither was Augustine or Gregory. History is a realm where the wheat and the tares grow together. There is always the possibility that evolution may miscarry, that non-being may triumph over being. If that possibility were not real, faith would have had no meaning. Evil is there, almost regnant in the *status quo*. But it is the negation of being, not being itself. If we sanctify the *status quo*, we are sanctifying evil and making it absolute.

Hope is, as Tillich put it, the negation of the negative. What is, is not the real. The real is what is to be. In denying what is to be (the future) and affirming what is (evil), we are denying the real. This is not realism.

Teilhard has a pregnant passage on this subject which leaves open the possibility of universalism itself being wrong and points to the inevitability of catastrophe :

"There are no summits without abysses. Enormous powers will be liberated in mankind by the inner play of its cohesion : though it may be that this energy will still be employed discordantly tomorrow, as today and in the past. Are we to foresee a mechanizing synergy under brute force, or a synergy of sympathy ? Are we to foresee man seeking to fulfil himself collectively upon himself, or personally on a greater than himself ? Refusal or acceptance of Omega ? A conflict may supervene. In that case the noösphere, in the course of and by virtue of the process which draws it together, will, when it has reached its point of unification, split into two zones each attracted to an

opposite pole of adoration. Thought has never completely united upon itself here below. Universal love would only vivify and detach finally a fraction of the noösphere so as to consummate it — the part which decided to 'cross the threshold', to get outside itself into the other.'<sup>1</sup>

## Conclusion

Tomorrow the world may come to an end, not with a bang, but in a whimper, perhaps. But then tomorrow may go on, for no man knoweth the time of his coming.

In either case, the kingdom is here, we have no choice but to live it, whether here or hereafter.

God is here too, in Man. Man is unbounded, except as creature, in his hands are power, wisdom and love. He has the capacity to create and to give, and in giving himself to his fellow-man finds fulfilment and growth.

The horizon of man is always receding. But that is no reason for not moving.

The creator is up to something in the Creation. The creation is in motion. It is not that he comes into history now and then to act. He has set that history in motion, and given us the intelligence to discern and direct the movement of that history.

Humanization as a world-problem is that of drawing all men all over the world to shed their pettiness and their lethargy, to put away their narrow loyalties and anxious fears for themselves, and to join in the one single movement of history towards point Omega.

Along the way, death will come. The movement will go on, on both sides of the veil.

<sup>1</sup> *The Phenomenon of Man*, Collins, 1960, pp. 288-289.



## EMERGING CONSCIOUSNESS FOR A NEW HUMANKIND.

(PAULOS GREGORIOS)

If history is documented memory, then the history of the human consciousness is very short indeed. Fortunately, memory is more than history, and the human consciousness has a longer memory than its documented history.

My desire in this paper is to trace the outlines of the development of human consciousness, in order that we may gain some understanding of where it is going in the near future. And in order to trace that development, I have often to step outside the limits of our documented history. Academic scholarship, which itself is part of that developed consciousness and whose competence to judge such matters needs often to be questioned, should bear with me, if all I say cannot be documented.

The human consciousness has a beginning which remains elusive to our methods of investigation. Where was the first human consciousness? Was it only in one place, or did it emerge in a dozen different areas? And if the first human (African) couples had parents, as they no doubt must have had, who were these parents, and how and in what way were the children different from their parents? How could the children be human and the parents animal or sub-human?

This problem of the difficulty of tracing the line of demarcation (between human and animal) will occur elsewhere, for example between vegetable and animal, or between inorganic and organic. From the beginning we should be prepared to examine the thesis that consciousness has no boundaries and is perhaps a single unit with many modes. That thesis, as old as consciousness in humanity, we shall not examine in detail in this paper.

So it seems that the emergence of human consciousness as distinct from animal consciousness is historically and even conceptually untraceable. And the infancy of that human consciousness also remains untraceable. Scientists tell us to-day that humanity of our kind has been around on our planet for more than 600,000 years, but that is a rough estimate, a good guess based on available evidence, one that may have to be substantially revised later on, in the light of new evidence.

Is it not surprising that most of the history of the human race is pre-historic in the sense that the fully documented history hardly goes back 6000 years-not even 1% of humanity's existence on earth? What is the significance of the fact that the human consciousness cannot document 99% of its historical development? For one thing is clear. We know so little, with our conscious minds, of the true nature of our consciousness. What Biology, Psychology and other modern disciplines can tell us about human mind and its evolution cannot even give us a clue to its real nature. For that clue we may have to trust the deeper reaches of our consciousness.

#### CONSCIOUSNESS IN HISTORY.

As consciousness emerges into remembered and documented history about 6000 years ago, it is a universal phenomenon with many common characteristics, but also with local peculiarities-reflected in differences of language, culture, myth, and ritual. But the common characteristics of this universal human consciousness as it emerges in historical view are striking. From Father Smith to Mircea Eliade there has<sup>je</sup> been many attempts to trace the main elements of this "Primal Vision" through the study of 'primitive' cultures. Our kind of rationality is certainly not one of these characteristics. Neither is the modern confidence that an individual mind can grasp reality through rational thinking.

What was there was an unverbaliſed awareness that one's mind and body were part of a whole which included not only other living human persons, but also earth and sun, river and mountain, plants and animals, the tribal ancestors and many "mythical" beings. One lived this unity with the whole through dance and song, myth and ritual, rather than talk or write about it. Talking and writing may be important for us children of the European Enlightenment, with our pronounced individualism and exaggerated confidence about language and proposition. But we will never experience that fundamental unity through talking and writing. It has to be experienced sensed, lived, even today even for us children of the European Enlightenment.

The second aspect of this Primal Vision was the awareness that there was more than what met the eye and the ear. This little corner of the universe where we run about and play is only that- a little corner which by no means openly reveals the nature of the whole. That nature has to be sought first through our sense, perception, through language and myth, worship and ritual, then ~~on~~ beyond these through a disciplined search, to a realisation, which cannot be expressed in words.

The Primal Vision was universal and is still universal. It is not only in the "primitive" tribes that it survives. It lives today in the suppressed layers of the consciousness of us children of the European Enlightenment. And my strong thesis today is that we must re-activate this layer of our consciousness, if we need to recover wholeness and healing. Both aspects of the primal vision are important-the unverbaliſed, ritually experienced awareness of wholeness, and the disciplined search for the hidden meaning of the whole.

## 2. THE EMERGENCE OF VERBALIZED CONSCIOUSNESS.

This second stage (always speaking of the later 1% of time of consciousness human existence) was also universal. Language-

became rich and diversified but was always supplemented by ritual music and dance to express the deeper dimensions of human experience and perception. With language, the self emerges as subject distinguished from object. The self as it emerges in prehistory is not totally alienated from the social, biological and inorganic environment. In fact, on the contrary the higher quest in all East Asian religions is to experience and realize the unity and oneness of the personal self with the cosmic self. This is the witness of two of the oldest spiritual traditions—the Indian and the Chinese.

And culture arises in this context of relating the personal self to the social self and to the cosmic self. At this stage the world is not an object for the subjective self to "explore" and "manipulate". The world like the body, is where you are—the matrix and manifestation of the self. It is only after the European Enlightenment that people begin to think systematically of the Person as subject and the world as object.

The development of language brings about new possibilities of cultural development. Language as it develops is largely spoken; very little written. Alas, this leaves us today in the dark, or at least very much in the dark, about what our pre-historic ancestors thought and said. Spoken language was one new symbolic expression of man's emerging consciousness. Written language is only a symbolic expression of what is itself a symbolic expression, namely spoken language.

As often language developed, along with greater elaboration in cult and ritual, the human consciousness rose to a new level. But this level was not without distortions. As verbal enrichment and conceptual clarity emerged, the possibilities of false perception also increased. The new perceptions were themselves the result of the added facility of clear conceptual language. There was more prose than poetry. Words in the previous language were evocative

rather than descriptive, activity in the right hemisphere of the brain decreased often, as the left hemisphere developed; philosophy, mathematics and the rudiments of science developed, but also language which directed ritual and morality with greater precision and clarity. The Sutra for meditation gives place to the sloka for disquisition, description and prescription. As greater manipulation of the external world became possible through language (descriptive and prescriptive) the inner world becomes turbulent with impingements from that external world. Where there was experience of inner harmony with the external world from which humanity was emerging, now there was the new struggle that of adaptation to the external world, and the effort to manipulate that world to suit ones needs. As agriculture and rudimentary technology developed and became more sophisticated, the new environmental transactions began demanding new adjustments in the body and in the brain functions. Evolution became more rapid not bodily adaptation so much as mental development. The drastic acceleration in evolution takes place in the form of culture, which included ritual and morality, but also new methods of cultivation, hunting and housing-leading to what we call civilisation, with the accent on the civitas or urban development.

But this civilisation was far from 'secular' in our sense of the term. It was deeply pervaded by 'religious' perceptions mythically or ritually expressed. The dealing with the immediate environment through gathering knowledge about it, and manipulating it in accordance with that knowledge are material processes, but always within a matrix of spiritual and religious presuppositions about oneself, other selves, the external world and the God or Gods involved in every natural phenomenon and process. Language, written or spoken, becomes the major instrument of consciousness, but by no means its only instrument. Myth and ritual always underird enrich and even shape language.

### 3. INTRINSIC EVOLUTION AND EXTRINSIC EVOLUTION.

In order to understand the nature of the problems facing the human consciousness today and the possibilities before it, we need to study the dialectic between intrinsic evolution and extrinsic evolution in the human species.

One way of grappling with this problem is to use the conceptual tools developed by Edward T. Hall, the author of 'The Silent Language (1959), The Hidden Dimension (1966) and 'Beyond Culture (Doubleday Anchor 1976). His basic concept is ~~ET~~-not Extra-Terrestrial, but Extension Transference. Simply put, it goes like this. Human societies create externalisations of processes, e.g. instead of cutting meat with your teeth, you do it with a knife; instead of speaking, you write; instead of walking, you roll in a two-wheeled or four-wheeled carriage with or without a mechanical motor.

As these externalisations of internal body/mental processes develop they can be separated from humanity and reified or "thingified". Among the examples cited, the knife, the pen and the motor car are things which can be made by others and bought by me. They take to the market, along with the products of agriculture. All things including food drink, clothing and artefacts become commodities. Air and water alone are largely exempted because in abundant and uncontrolled supply.

One of the greatest crises in the development of consciousness has come about in the period of "universal affluence" and "consumption explosion". As affluence comes within reach, and the commodities become available without visible limit, there is a tremendous pull on consciousness towards the means and manifestations of affluence, reified and external to consciousness.

This pull becomes universal, and children brought up within such a culture are unable to resist it. As consciousness becomes forcibly attached to commodities and things, the other capacity of consciousness, to be at one with itself is turbulently ruffled.

The mind is thus a battleground - the <sup>insic</sup> ~~extrinsic~~ evolution affecting the intrinsic evolution of consciousness. As knowledge

develops through extrinsic evolution of consciousness in its capacity to know things—to know how they work (science) and to know how to work on them (technology), there is a concomitant development of intrinsic ignorance. Extrinsic evolution is by "separative" knowledge, while there is a corresponding devolution in the intrinsic aspect of consciousness and its capacity for "integrative" knowledge of the whole and the self. As the objective and physical order becomes better known and so more "real" the inner realm and spiritual realities become less perceptible less held in awareness. Growth in "knowledge" of the external world thus becomes correlated to an increase in "ignorance" of the world of the whole and the self.

Sri Aurobindo analyses this ignorance in terms of a sevenfold self-ignorance,

- (a) Original ignorance - Ignorant of the Absolute, the one from whom the many of our knowledge originates
- (b) Cosmic ignorance. of the oblivion timeless and immutable self-in amidst of our knowledge of the many selves which are in time and change and which we take to be the only truth.
- (c) Egoistic ignorance - ignorant of our self which is in union with the cosmic self: knowing of the Ego, the Id and the Super Ego, we presume that the "I" is the most important centre of existence.
- (d) Temporal ignorance: So aware of our little span of time and change, we become ignorant of our own eternal being in time.
- (e) Psychological ignorance. taking the little layer of our conscious mind to be the whole of our minds, we become ignorant of what Aurobindo calls the Super-conscious dimensions of our psyche.
- (f) Constitutional ignorance thinking that we are constituted by life and body and mine we become ignorant of the supreme and mysterious constructive principle in us
- (g) Practical ignorance caught in a maze of sensations, thoughts

actions, willings, responses and so on wandering among errors and desires, strivings and failures, we become more and more practically ignorant about what life is for (The Life Divine Book II Part II Chapter XV)

This is a summary of Sri Aurobindo's perception of Avidya, of ignorance of the human problem in general. It is against this multiple ignorance that the sage of Pondicherry would prescribe 'integral Yoga' as the medicine. An integral Yoga includes as a vital and indispensable element in its total and ultimate aim the conversion of the whole being into a higher spiritual consciousness and a larger divine existence. (The Synthesis of Yoga p.265)

Aurobindo suggests that not all may be able to plunge headlong into this "larger divine existence", and may be better advised to master the Karmayoga first. But the ultimate aim is to reach the "supra-mental consciousness" where the dominant reality is integration of will, emotion and consciousness, in "union with the Divine Reality of our being and all being (p-266)

#### 4. THE NATURE OF THE NEW CONSCIOUSNESS

The main point of this paper merges at this point. It is Sri Aurobind's point that overcoming the multifold ignorance through integral Yoga is the solution to the human problem. While agreeing with this solution as a partial answer, from my Christian perspective I need to go further in two dimensions beyond this solution.

Aurobindo admits that supra-mental consciousness, experiencing the unity of one's own being and of all being with the Divine is a "difficult distant, ultimate stage the end of a far off vista" not an immediate objective, but one that comes after jumping over many obstacles.

It is at this point of this ultimate objective that I wish to express my qualms. I submit that there are two qualifications to Sri Aurobindo's programme which are implied in it, but not adequately worked out. These two aspects are (a) community and (b) the material world.

Both are implied in Sri Aurobindo's perception that the ultimate



aim is the realisation of the unity of one's own being and of all beings with the Divine. My contention is that, even this aside of attaining the supra-mental consciousness this unity must be worked out in a different way as a guide to social living in a world of science and technology, and further, that such a working out of community life and scientific-~~in~~ technological mastery will alter the content of the experience of the supra-mental.

There is no doubt that Sri Aurobindo and Sri Ramana had an experience of the over-mind. My submission, presumptuous as it may seem, is that we need a different quality of self-realisation through community living and scientific-technological mastery of the external world. And both in projecting the ultimate objective and in clearing the path to it. Community living and mastery of the external world through science and technology have an essential role.

Sri Aurobindo is unlikely to agree with me at this point. For hsm science-technology and perhaps even community life, belong to the world of multi-fold ignorance, to the inferior mind and not to ultimate reality. I suspect that, again speaking very presumptuously, that is what has gone wrong in Pondicherry, both at the Pondicherry Ashram and at Auroville, as well as at the ~~the~~ ashram in Delhi. I am not suggesting that a harmonious community, knowing and producing through science-technology is the ultimate goal of humanity. But I am suggesting that the very quest must begin not from the ego's need for emancipation and realisation but from the perception, that our unity in being with other human persons and with the material world has to find expression in an integral community Yoga which aims at the emancipation of the whole of reality and not just of one's own ego.

According to Sri Aurobindo the pursuit is one of knowledge "a state of knowledge by which we can touch enter or know by identity this Eternal, Infinite and Absolute, a consciousness other than our ordinary consciousness of ideas and forms and things, a knowledge that is not what we call knowledge but

something self-existent, everlasting, infinite (op cit, p.273)  
My contention is that the shaping of our ordinary consciousness has something to do with the content of the other consciousness into which we have to enter.

This is a major point of disagreement, and I do not want in the name of agreement between Christian and Hindus to blur this difference of perception which is crucial.

The Advaita Vedantin often takes the dogmatic position that change, which is related to time has nothing to do with Truth, which is unchanging and eternal. As a Christian I do not agree with this view. I more or less summarily reject the following view of Sri Aurobindo

"All cosmic existence or all that we call existence is a state of ignorance. All that is individual, all that is Cosmic has to be austere renounced by the seeker of the absolute truth. The Supreme quiescent Self or else the absolute Nihil is the sole Truth, the only object of spiritual knowledge. The state of knowledge the consciousness other than this temporal that we must attain is Nirvana, an extinction of ego, a cessation of all mental, vital and physical activities, of all activities whatsoever, a supreme illumined quiescence, the pure bliss of an impersonal tranquillity Self-absorbed and ineffable" (op cit p-273-274)

Without settling this question of the nature of truth, we cannot begin to work towards ~~defining~~ delineating the contours of the "emerging consciousness for a new human kind" At this point, I must go into a certain amount of tedious Christian theologising, in order to give some content to the expression of my own belief as a Christian.

Truth and Reality are difficult terms to expound or clarify. Etymologically the English word Truth is troth, that which is reliable and trustworthy. In the Christian tradition, the Hebrew expressions emeth and emunah both of which are translated 'truth' have the connotation of steadfastness and reliability. Steadfastness is different from unchangingness. For the Hebrew the unchanging is static, but steadfastness is dynamic, active, and compassionate, not impersonal. In fact in many instances truth is compounded with mercy and love and justice. Just to cite a few example

Deuteronomy 32:4- 'a God of Truth(emunah), no evil, merciful and upright.

Genesis 24:27 "Blessed be Yawhch the God of my master Abraham who never forsakes his steadfast love(hased) and his truth(emeth) to my Master

Exodus 34:6 "And Yawhch passed by in front of him (Moses) and Yawhch proclaimed: Yawhch, God merciful (rahim) and gracious, forbearing, great in his unfailing love(hased) and truth (emeth)

Samuel 2:6 "And may Yawhch do steadfast love(hased) and truth(emeth) with you

Psalms 25:10 "All the ways of Yawhch are unfailing (hased) and truth(emeth) to those who keep covenant with Him and his testimonies.

Psalms 98:3 "He (Yawhch) has remembered his unfailing love (hased) and his truth(emunah) to the house of Israel"

These are not accidental coincidences. They form a pattern in the Old Testament. The words emeth, emunah and hased have stood for truth, faithfulness, mercy, love and unfailing dependability. And this is the basic Christian understanding of Truth not as "unsublated by subsequent experience" but as reliability and depen-

when my unity with all is experienced as love and not as a concept.

It is the truth-love combination that we have to experience in our consciousness requires this integration of truth with love, reality with compassion, of fidelity with goodness, reliability with righteousness.

6- THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEW CONSCIOUSNESS.

If emeth and hased, reliable truth and unfailing love are thus integral to each other, and if our unity with all being is not merely a given, but also a task to be worked out through love the spirituality for this new consciousness must break new ground, going beyond the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo and beyond the simplistic advaita of many of its modern exponents.

Integrated Yoga still demands a shedding of all interest in the passing world revealed to our seven fold ignorance. The new Yoga asks that we turn to this world with a new love, a new redeeming compassion towards it, and a passionate interest in it not to make it serve my ends, but to make it serve its own best interests.

I have no name for this new Yoga. To call it integral Yoga would be to invite mis-understanding. It is a community Yoga which takes the vyavaharika ~~xxxxxx~~ loka seriously. Seeking to make it a manifestation of love, beauty and Goodness.

It is at this point that we have to transcend all naive simplicisms. A heretofore new spirituality is called for - a spirituality in which people of all faiths, and the secular devotees of science/technology can all find a role to play, a participating role which complements and enriches the whole.

It goes beyond integral Yoga in the sense that while it acknowledges the evanescent and transitory character of this world, still takes it seriously, just as we take food and air and water seriously, though we don't think they are the truth. But just as one cannot live without food and air and water human beings cannot realize the truth without going through this world of historical reality.

It takes this world sufficiently seriously to be pre-occupied

dability. And this is the basic Christian understanding of Truth not as 'unsublated by subsequent experience ' but as reliability and dependability, in love, compassion and uprightness. This is not an impersonal understanding of truth. The idea of changelessness is there, but not in a static sense, but in the sense of an ever recurring but also surprising fidelity and reliability.

It is my philosophical contention that that is the only kind of truth one can attain while we are in the body and possibly also without the body. Even when one experiences the unity of one's being with the being of all selves and of the world, this is not a knowledge which has no further to go. I know that Vedantins believe that the Sakshatkara is the terminus beyond which there is neither road nor need to proceed. I cannot accept that belief, and I do hope that Sri Ramana and Sri Aurobindo are still proceeding along new paths.

As a Christian, I want to experience my oneness with God and with his universe, but I believe that when I do experience that oneness I would only have started on a quest which goes on indefinitely, with ever new surprises and new stages of realisation and growth into perfection. But I believe also that, once I proceed on the quest after having realised my oneness with the all, I would be doubly concerned to carry the rest of humanity and its alienated consciousness with me. I would want all humanity to experience this oneness and to desist from the follies that arise from the separated consciousness.

The important point is that, I do not experience truth as unchanging or static. Truth is power-dynamic power, compassionate, wise, creative power, power in love and freedom. Truth is not the stopping point, but the starting point of true existence. "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"-free to live and not just be.

Truth is love, for God is love. Love is the all-binding element of consciousness and truth is experienced

with it as the arena where truth has to be made manifest loving compassionate, life-giving, dependable truth. It takes community seriously enough not to be toally concerned about one's own personal sakshatkara or nirvana but to be passionately committed to the community's common quest for manifesting the compassionate, loving, dependable truth of God in the midst of all the struggle and strife, selfishness and discord. It can be called 'integral community Yoga' because it wants to integrate inner and outer reality in a holistic approach, because it seeks fulfilment of a community rather than that of individuals, and because it is a discipline which demands the best in us.

. CONCLUSION. 'The Basis of Integral Community Yoga'

I submit that the basis of this "Integral Community Yoga" would be three folds:

- (a) The community's worship experience and awareness of the unseen dimensions of reality-enacted in dance and song, ritual and sacrifice, silence and reflection, meditation and contemplation. This is the formative experience of the new consciousness being formed-like the thousand petals of the lotus turning toward the Sun and receiving energy to grow together into a thing of beauty.
- (b) The community's life together-life and relations with each other in the community and with those outside the community a life of simplicity and joy, love and compassion peace and tranquillity, of caring actively for the needs of others, of resolving conflicts, of overcoming bitterness and meanness, jealousy and ambition, resentments and grudge a community that radiates blessing, and is actively concerned for the whole of ~~man~~ humanity without any narrow boundaries.
- (c) The community's capacity to handle material reality through science and technology, art and music, in order to create new things of beauty and usefulness, with which to praise God, to bring out the glory of the universe and to serve all life and all truth.

The new consciousness wave that is abroad in the west has many possibilities, but many dangers also are inherent in that wave. The fascination of the spirit world can be a trap, and without proper guidance people can slip into greater unfreedoms. I would like to suggest some rules of thumb for guidance:

- (a) something is not necessarily true because someone from the spirit-world communicates it to you through extraordinary revelations.
- (b) the teaching of a person is not necessarily true or safe, just because that person can perform extraordinary miracles.
- (c) the quality of a Guru or a religious community has always be assessed through the truth, wisdom, love and goodness, manifest in his or its life. \$ compassion for all, love without hatred or narrowness non-desire for material gain or worldly popularity and honesty without any ostentation or false piety.
- (d) Be way of any religious teacher who panders to your love of ease, to your inclination to lust, or to your desire to be a worldly success.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

## THE QUEST FOR THE HUMAN

Whatever else the second half of the 20th century may be, it is the half-century of the liberation of man<sup>n</sup> - perhaps hopefully also of the freedom of man.

Liberation and freedom are not quite <sup>the same.</sup> ~~synonymous~~.  
Liberation from ~~Yoke~~ and bondage, from oppression and injustice, constitutes the negative aspect of freedom. Freedom in its fullness includes more than Liberation. <sup>There is</sup> ~~The~~ positive aspect of "freedom ~~for~~" ~~as distinct from~~ "freedom from" which is the main constituent of liberation; <sup>is "freedom for". It is more than liberation</sup> ~~is~~ Man's quest for ultimate freedom. It is man's effort to be truly man - the quest for the human.

This quest for freedom which is the central thrust<sup>(f)</sup> of human history has in our half-century received a particularly strong push. There are great landmarks in previous centuries - the French Revolution, the American War of Independence, <sup>abolition</sup> ~~and the abolition~~ of slavery, and the Russian Revolution of our own century are milestones in the slow process of human emancipation. In the second half of the 20th century there have been four significant and inter-related movements of liberation.

<sup>I</sup>  
The half-century got on its way with the forward swing of ~~de-ee-len~~ de-colonialization. The gaining of national independence by the Philippines, India, Burma, Pakistan, Ceylon, and Indonesia, and the liberation of China from western dominance marked the beginning of the



the half-century. This movement spread with unexpected speed and some 1500 million people were liberated from the colonial yoke. Today only a few last bastions of colonialism remain - Angola and Mozambique under Portugese colonialism and the black peoples of southern Africa under the inhuman ~~dominian~~ domination of a hardened and reactionary white minority of colonizers. Southern Africa, geographically remote from the rest of the world, continues to be the theatre of political bondage simply because the conscience of the powerful nations of the West has not been sufficiently aroused/~~in order~~ to enable them to take diastic action. The United States and Britain as well as the Portugese, the Dutch and the Belgians bear a heavy share of the responsibility for the frustration of freedom in these lands.

Spurred on by the liberation of a large sector of the black peoples of Sub-Sahara Africa a second movement of liberation began in America. It was initiated through quiet non-violent events like the sit-ins and bus boycotts, but has slowly led to the self-affirmation of the down-trodden people of the U.S.A. - chiefly the blacks, but eventually all the poor and the oppressed. It is an upsurge of freedom which cannot be stopped or bottled up. It has to explode yet, threatening the security of the oppressor and drawing into the wake of the struggle all men of goodwill, even from among the unoppressed. We

are still watching the initial stages of this movement of liberation which is bound to change the face of America in the course of the next decade. When it gains enough of a victory and some self-confidence, this movement of the blacks and the liberals of this country will not only change the shape of the American city, but may also come to the aid of the oppressed blacks in southern Africa. It is not perhaps totally idle to hope that the uprising of "the poor" of America will lead also to the emancipation of the poor of the world who are still oppressed and exploited by the rich of this world.

A third movement of liberation begins to break a yoke which was created in this century - the oppression of peoples by totalitarian communism. Yugoslavia was the first to fling the challenge in the face of external domination and exploitation of one communist China's defiance of Russia was the high watermark of this revolt, country by another. China's defiance of Russia was the high watermark of this revolt. Albania followed. Then Romania asserted herself. The Hungarian effort was frustrated

by superior Russian might. <sup>tried, perhaps with too</sup> ~~Now~~ Czechoslovakia ~~has quietly~~ <sup>of optimism to</sup> ~~and without too much fanfare staged a programme of liberalization, which has caused some precipitate reactions~~ <sup>The superior might of Russia has temporarily stifled this movement</sup> ~~on the part of Russia, but we have not yet heard the last~~ <sup>yet</sup> of this. The Russian writers and literary men are beginning

to assert themselves. Communist intellectuals in many parts of the world are beginning to question some of the fundamental assumptions of Marxism. A new Reformation is breaking out in the Marxist world which goes far beyond questions of simple revisionism or choosing between Russia and ~~Ghri~~ China as the leader of the Communist world. When a leading communist intellectual life Roger Garaudy says that under a communist regime man must still ask the question of the meaning of existence and that the heart of man must not lose its depth, he is talking about more than simple revising the economic interpretation of history or questioning the accepted strategies of revolution. These new Marxists are raising a new revolution within Communist society. The new ~~Marx---Marxists-are-raising-a-new-revolution-within~~ Communist Marxist is also in a process of liberation, engaged in the urgent ~~g~~ quest for the new humanity.

A fourth and exceedingly significant movement of freedom in our half-century is what may be called the student revolt. It began before our half-century - primarily in~~x~~ the early 40's in the independence movement of India. The students left their class-room in large numbers to shout "John Bull, Quit India," and were somewhat surprized to find that John Bull did really quit in 1947. Since then all political parties have sought to use the university student community as an <sup>Sc</sup>early available instrument of demonstration.

Today the phenomenon of student protest and demonstration spans the whole wide world. In Japan, Korea and Turkey, students have scored some significant ~~vietim~~ victories in changing Government policy. The Italian student revolt had focussed on university reform, but it soon led to a bloody clash with the Police in down tome Rome ~~last March~~, and without pre-planning the student protest now focusses on the evils of Italian society.

The West Berlin protest against the Axel Springer newspaper chain, led by Rudi Deutschke <sup>has now</sup> ~~may soon~~ spread to West German universities, though the democratic tradition has a hard time striking roots in German society. In ~~Spain~~ the protests at the universities of Madrid and Barcelona may soon turn into revolts against the oppressive social, political, and economic structures of that country. In France, the cité Universitaire revolt was first directed against university regulations requiring men and women to live in separate dormitories, but has now spread to other universities like Nanterre and the Sorbonne and begins to focus on world political and economic structures. The Polish student demonstrations, now temporarily suppressed by the authorities by such drastic action as dismissing the demonstrators and then drafting them into the army, may soon erupt into a violent revolution in that country, though the recent Czech experience may hold them in check for a while.

In a country like Greece, where the present military Government follows policies painfully reminiscent of the early activities of Hitler's Third Reich, in a so-called heroic effort to revive the ancient glories of the Christian-hellenic civilization that was Byzantium, many look to the university community to be the centre of truly heroic and sacrificial resistance.

There is no need to speak of the student protest in America - of Berkely<sup>e</sup> and Duke, Cornell and Columbia. I am told that there were 71 student demonstrations in ~~this country~~<sup>the U.S.A.</sup> during the first two months of 1968. Only a very small percentage - possibly less than 3 per cent - of the 6 million university students in the U.S.A. were involved. But the trend is clear. The movement is spreading rather than waning. ~~The end of the academic year of course cooled things off for a while. But the possibilities are that this summers' events will lead to further and better planned student activities in more campuses when the universities reopen in September. Such activities may be less sporadic and sporadic and hopefully less violent, but they are not going to decrease in extent and scope.~~

These four movements - liberation from the colonial yoke, the self-affirmation of the poor and the oppressed, the eruption of truth and freedom in communist countries, and the universal phenomenon of

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student protest, add up to one thing. Society is sick, both nationally and internationally, and the symptoms call for drastic surgery and therapy.

II

And it is at this point that we need to go beyond analysis and diagnosis, to do some bold positive planning of the contour of a healthy human society. "Freedom from" has begun to operate in a manner and dimension that is impossible for mankind to ignore. The quest for the human has begun. Fear of the symptoms can lead only to attempts to suppress them temporarily. This in turn can complicate the pathology and render the cure more difficult.

Clear and bold thinking, and equally decisive action alone can begin to show the way forward. It would be futile to prescribe a complete course of surgery and therapy at this moment. But the removal of certain fundamental misconceptions is a prerequisite to wise prescription of remedies. And this paper shall attempt only the questioning of four of these false assumptions, from a definitely Christian, but not necessarily ~~Biblicist~~ Biblicist or dogmatic point of view.

1) The first set of wrong assumptions has to do with the dialectic between planned change and revolutionary change. It was Professor André Philippe of the Sorbonne who proposed in an article in the preparatory

volumes for the Church and society World Conference at Geneva, 1966, that revolution as a means of effecting change is obsolete. His argument was that we are living in a technological society and that one of the basic characteristics of technology is that the machinery for change is built into the technological system. Constant research, constant revision of technique, continuous projection of the future and preparation for it belong integrally, according to Professor Philippe, to any modern society. Revolutions are caused by unpreparedness for the future and failure to provide in time for the necessary change in political and social economy.

If Professor Philippe is right, then the universities, where research and planning can be effectively undertaken, should be the last places to call for a revolution. And yet it remains a fact that great universities like Sorbonne and Oxford are the greatest resistors of change today. What Professor Philippe fails to take into account is the fact of vested interests in the established order which obstinately resist change. If change involves loss of privilege to those in power, then the best research is likely to be shelved without being translated into effective action. The need for change is often more

acute for those who lack controlling power, and research itself is often biased in the direction of protecting the interests of <sup>c</sup>those in power. Diagnosis of what ~~i-s~~ is wrong in society will be different, depending on whether it is the oppressed or the oppressor who initiates the research and translates it into action. Revolutionary change is attempted often because the diagnosis and cure proposed by the victims of oppression <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ not acceptable to those in power. In many Latin American countries, there is an impressive body of evidence that salvation can come only by a <sup>o</sup>through overhauling of the political and economic ~~ety~~ system, which would include emancipation from North American political and economic power. But those who hold political and economic power within these countries are themselves beneficiaries of American political and economic power-play. In such situations it seems foolish to expect that the holders of power will initiate the necessary research, planning and implementation for ~~bringin~~ bringing about a juster social, political and economic order. To talk about constitutional change and democratic planning and implementation in those countries is to say that the oppressors should be allowed to umpire the battle between themselves and the oppressed. In such situations there seems to be no alternative to revolutionary change.



No wonder then that Che Guevarra becomes the hero of the oppressed as well as of the intelligent and the perceptive.

Planned change within the constitution should take place in all societies, whether in America or in Cuba, in Russia or in China. If this ceases then that society becomes, like Stalin's Russia, dangerously sick. But to say that it will always be possible to <sup>peacefully</sup> bring about the necessary changes within the existing system of law and order is to go contrary to two of the basic affirmations of the Christian faith. The present structure of law and order is a human creation. To make it into an absolute that cannot be questioned is to turn a human human creation into an object of worship. This is the sin of idolatry. Law and Order as a way of social organization seems to be God-given and belongs integrally to human existence on earth. Man cannot live in anarchy. His social existence has to be controlled and directed by order and organization. Even the revolutionary knows that ~~he~~ cannot function without a revolutionary law and order. This is clear in the extraordinary efficiency of the Black Militants in Hamilton Hall at Columbia.

Idolatry comes in when any existing system of law and order is absolutized. The particular system of law and order under which we live was created in order to promote justice and dignity and the peaceful pursuit of the interests of all men. But if it is no longer

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adequate for that purpose, how can we still call it a good thing, and shape our thinking primarily in terms of defending ~~propety~~ property, preserving law and order and so on?

The Christian faith also objects to man being a slave of the law. "For freedom Christ has set you free. Resist, therefore, and be not enslaved again" says the Apostle Paul to the Galatians<sup>a</sup>. (5:1). The law, when it is good, exists as an external framework, which each citizen is required to interbrige. The law says "Thou shalt not murder". But if my not murdering is due only to the fact that the law makes that demand on me, then I have not yet become a man, but am only a criminal restrained by the strong arm of the law, and therefore not genuinely free. If, on the other hand, I have genuinely interiorized the law, in such a way that even if the law did not exist, I would not murder, then as far as I am concerned the law makes no difference to me, except in so far as it restrains other criminals from murdering me or my children. In other words the law has no meaning except in so far as there are people in the world who have<sup>ve</sup> not grown up enough to be free from the law. The law is ~~for~~ for the immature and the children. Once I have interiorized the law, I am free from the law.

The same applies even to taxes. If I acknowledge my social obligations and therefore am convinced that I have to make a contribution to the institutions ~~that~~ <sup>which</sup> render certain co-ordinated services for the whole <sup>of</sup> society, and ~~if I am convinced~~ that my tax money will be used in a responsible way by those to whom it is given in trust, then even without the law of taxation I shall gladly pay my taxes, and fulfil my other obligations to society. It is only because not all people are mature enough to acknowledge their social obligations in full and because those to whom the taxes are given in trust are not mature enough to use them responsibly, ~~acknowledging~~ their own social obligations, that we have <sup>to have</sup> the whole legal machinery of law and order.

We find today that both in socialist or communist countries and in ~~so-called~~ democratic states like India or U.S.A., the State, or the system of law and order is alienated from man. It is something which man has created, but <sup>it</sup> has actually run away from him and is now threatening to master and overpower man. By our ~~idoleg-~~ idolatry of the present system of law and order, we are increasing this process of alienation, and thereby making true social and personal maturity mere difficult for man.

2) The second set of wrong assumptions in our dealing with the current malaise of man relates to the dialectic between violence and non-violence.

One reason why the word "revolution" scares many people in our time is its invariable association with broken skulls, machine guns and blood-baths. The words "revolution" and "violence" are often used more emotionally than rationally. What do these words mean? It is clear that when we <sup>2</sup>spak of the technological revolution and the Bolshevik revolution we are not using the word 'revolution' in the same sense. The use of the word in expressions like technological revolution or industrial revolution refer primarily to a change in the means of production and ~~distribution~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~which have~~ a sweeping impact on human social relations and living conditions. When we speak of political revolution on the other hand, we mean the application of force to change the seat of power from one socio-economic class to the other. Expressions like~~d~~ "permanent revolution" only confuse the issue. What is meant by such an expression is that the change of the seat of political power does not solve the problem, but that the new incumb<sup>2</sup>ants of power have to be vigilant, disciplined and <sup>2</sup>hardwork~~ing~~ enough to build the nation's economic power so that it may not again be enslaved by others.

A revolution always involves violence in the sense  
(1) that the transfer of power is not accomplished with  
the consent of the previous holders of power, but against  
their will, and (2) that it is not effected by legal  
processes acknowledged as such by the holders of power.  
It may sometimes be accomplished with a minimum of skull-  
breaking or shooting, as for example in the Greek  
military junta's taking over power in Greece <sup>two</sup> ~~last~~ years ago.

Violence itself is a highly ambiguous concept. It  
means really violating the will of the other, or making  
~~really-violate~~ him act against his will. It is not  
necessarily the application of physical force to hurt  
the body of the other. It is the application of force  
to make the other do what you want against his will.  
Wars and revolutions are not the only available forms  
of violence. Violence is endemic in all systems of law  
and order, so long as there are the oppressors and the  
oppressed. Violence is there, built into the system,  
when a group of people are forced into the slums and are  
reduced to sub-human ways of living. Violence is there  
where big business concentrates power in their hands  
and can use that power to bend the government to act  
in their interests. Violence is there where justice  
is denied to the weak or the dignity of man is violated.  
All <sup>most</sup> all the existing national and international  
systems of law and order, whether they be so-called

communist or so-called democratic nations, embody forms of endemic or systemic violence.

Such use of violence or force or power in the interests of injustice and exploitation call for a reactionary or revolutionary violence from the victims of injustice and oppression. And many people are convinced that in certain countries at least, the holders of power cannot be made responsive to the demands of justice by permission<sup>ve</sup> or constitutional methods. It is in such countries where the degree of endemic or systemic violence is so high and the possibilities of constitutional change so low - as clearly for example in Dr Valier's Haiti<sup>U</sup>, that revolutions can be justified. If one fails to support revolution in such a case on the grounds of convictions of non-violence, then one is supporting the endemic or systematic violence in the status quo which is destroying the life and dignity of Man.

Some<sup>2</sup> times violence can be resorted to by the oppressed when they are convinced that the constitutional means available to them are so slow in their efficacy to change the will of the ruling class. There are people for example, who think that the violation of the dignity of the black man in America can be <sup>averted</sup> ~~removed~~ by constitutional means, given time and patience. It is becoming clear

however that the ~~aw~~ avowedly non-violent southern Christian Leadership conference will itself soon have to resort to civil disobedience, i.e. to use an illegal and unconstitutional move, in order to keep up the struggle to achieve racial equality, economic opportunity and human dignity for the black man in this country. Martin Luther King himself was aware that the negro struggle could not be carried on by constitutional means alone. Besides an oppressed people often feel, with some justification, that they have to be defiant and rude to their oppressors in order to make clear that they are not receiving their dignity as a concession from the oppressor but claiming it as a birthright of man. This is the only way to understand Black Power in its essential origin and spiritual dynamic. This is also the best way of understanding a great deal of the anti-Americanism or anti-westernism of the two-third world of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Violence has, of course, its own nemesis. It is not possible to use hatred and violence as tools of regaining self-esteem and dignity without having a price to pay in terms of consequences. Ultimately, man has to overcome violence and hatred, just as he needs to overcome law as an external master. But violence and hatred are overcome when man becomes capable of receiving forgiveness and forgiving others.

The Christian faith does not condone violence and hatred. In fact it condemns violence and hatred. But it does so not only when violence and hatred takes the form of revolutionary overthrow of those in power, but also when violence <sup>endemic</sup> ~~evident~~ in the system destroys human dignity. That is the whole point of the prophetic message which pictures God Himself as violent and full of hate in his retribution of ~~the~~ justice.

It is not Christian to assume that we can get through to our chosen goals without conflict. The whole gospel is a message of a battle with the powers of evil in which victory has already been won, but the struggle goes on.

Sacrifice belongs to the essence of ~~prayers~~. progress. There is no smooth passage for man towards his ~~destiny~~.



The Unity of The Grand Continuum  
Implications for the Future of Humanity  
(Paulos Mar Gregorios)

(111)

My beloved Alma Mater, to which I already owe so much, has done me another honour in inviting me to speak on The Unity of the Grand ~~land~~ Continuum today. I am grateful, though somewhat diffident <sup>about my own abilities</sup>, for this opportunity to share with you some thoughts which have been developing in my mind for some time now. I thank President Thomas Gillespie, my classmate and my next door neighbour in Brown Hall for the years 1952-54, when I was at Princeton, and his colleagues and students for this honour.

I know that my title can be baffling. Let me try to explain. By the Grand Continuum, I mean the whole created order, as it exists contingent upon the will-word-wisdom of the Creator. I may be forgiven if I do not use the word 'nature' to denote it, as some people do. As a Christian, I cannot believe that 'nature' can exist by itself. I reject the notion of a self-existent and self-regulating 'nature', not only because of my faith, but also because I do not find in modern science any basis for the self-existence of 'nature' or <sup>of</sup> 'matter', for that matter.

## The Notion of 'Nature'

'Nature' as a name for the whole is an eminently pagan notion. But the classical Greek philosophical notion of 'nature' or phusis as developed by the Pre-Socratics, has been basically altered in the course of the development of modern thought, for example, such as was developed in the Germanic tradition of Naturwissenschaft, from which ~~which~~ <sup>which</sup> ~~natural philosophy~~ <sup>physical</sup> and modern sciences have their derivation.

Natural philosophy as developed by Galileo, Comte and Darwin was the pursuit of a total, objective, rational knowledge of all phenomena. This 'critical rationality' on which both modern western philosophy and modern science depend is the hallmark of western liberal thought. But there were exceptions even ~~among~~ <sup>among</sup> western ~~thought~~ <sup>thinkers</sup>, who, like Leibniz, Hegel and Bergson, were sceptical of this analytical-critical rationality. They would give a higher value to intuition than to analytical rationality in understanding all phenomena, the whole as it presents itself to our sense-perception and ~~the~~ understanding, as well as to our intuition.

To the ancients in all cultures, with a few individual exceptions, 'nature' was basically a hierophany, a manifestation of the Sacred, not an object to be grasped by human

objective rationality and manipulated by <sup>human</sup> technology. The German Naturphilosophen emphasized the noumena behind the phenomena; they were not content with empiricism and rationality as modern science seemed to have been for some time. The early German Naturphilosophen did not posit a self-existent Natur. They always sought to go beyond the empirical to what Goethe's Faust wanted to know: Was die Welt an innersten Zusammenhalt, or the inner force that holds the world together. This is the authentic western tradition, I believe.

Modern science, sought to depart from this tradition by a rational-critical analysis of that inner force, by concentrating on the physical forces - like gravitation, thermodynamics, electro-magnetism, and the 'weak' and the 'strong' forces of molecular and atomic cohesion. <sup>with some dramatic effects, but also, alas, disastrous consequences.</sup>

<sup>tradition</sup> In the classical German tradi-  
" God was the original point of departure, the source of origin, the uncaused cause. This was later swept away as an unnecessary hypothesis but only by positing <sup>another</sup> original cause, namely the Big Bang. The Cause of the Big Bang itself was laid aside as inaccessible to scientific enquiry, and therefore not worth investigating at all.

Giordano Bruno's universe, the precursor of modern science, was a living being - akin to Plato's deuteros theos, or second god. But a second god can hardly be manipulated <sup>by humans</sup>. It becomes easier to manipulate in accordance with our greed, ~~and~~ if <sup>one</sup> can exorcise this <sup>second</sup> god from the universe, deny any life or personality to the world, in other words to secularize the universe.

Living Nature - The Gaia Hypothesis  
There are attempts here and there in <sup>contemporary</sup> science at least to restore life to the world; the best example is <sup>the British Scientist</sup> James Lovelock's 'Gaia Hypothesis'. Gaia as you know is Mother Earth in Greek mythology. It was William <sup>Sheldon</sup> Goulding, <sup>who brought back</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>into English</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> term 'Gaia Hypothesis', which Lovelock later accepted as a name for his hypothesis.

Lovelock's scientific hypothesis (not yet experimentally proved) is that the entire biosphere, that is the planet earth, with its environment, is a single integrated living organism. The characteristics of life, for Lovelock, are  
(a) homeostasis, or the capacity to maintain certain internal <sup>constants</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the impact of</sup> over against <sup>a</sup> a certain range of external turbulences - the human body temperature of 98.6° Fahrenheit being the best example;

- (b) feed-back loops, cybernetic circuits and chrono-rhythms related to factors in the environment like the rising and setting of the sun, the ~~movement~~ phases of the moon, the ebb and flow of the tides etc.

The Gaia hypothesis has been the topic for a large number of international and national scientific seminars and conferences. Several books have been written about it. It <sup>is in vogue today, because it</sup> appeals to people aware of the ecological catastrophe facing us. It helps to neutralize our aggression against the environment. It suggests that we treat Mother Earth with more respect than we have in the recent past. It helps to get out of our old mental images of 'nature, red in tooth and claw' - images which justified our own retaliatory violence and aggression against 'nature'. Evolution, once we accept the Gaia Hypothesis, will no longer be a ~~teeth-gritting~~ <sup>grit-teeth</sup> titanic struggle of living beings both against 'nature' and against men, in order to survive. The Gaia hypothesis can help us as a basis for a more sane and gentle environmental ethic. It gives us a new vision of ~~our~~ humanity's place in 'nature', a necessary corrective to the dominium terrae vision which has brought

us to the present predicament. It shows us that we are open systems related to a larger network of inter-acting systems, and therefore that our behaviour affects the network which sustains us as open systems. It can induce greater respect for the Primal Vision, that original religion of all human tribes in which <sup>everything in</sup> the environment was fully alive and personal - <sup>a vision</sup> still maintained in ~~those~~ truncated versions by native Americans, African and Asian tribes.

As a scientific hypothesis, the evidence now available for its establishment is far from sufficient. If it gets accepted in the scientific community the revolutionary change in the general scientific paradigm would be even more radical than the Copernican revolution or the Quantum-Relativity revolution. Science will no longer be the same, for its 'object', 'Nature' would no longer be a thing, but a person Mother Earth, ~~living~~ throbbing with life and vested with its own dignity. Planetary Consciousness will shift from 'spaceship earth' to Mother Earth, suffering from the cruelty, aggression and mindlessness of her children.

### 3. Mother Earth or The Grand Continuum?

The Gaia Hypothesis, I will concede, is a great improvement over the concepts of 'spaceship earth' and Gorbachevian Globalism, but I would like to enter two or three caveats at Gaia and proceed to my own Grand Continuum.

The threefold caveats at the Gaia Hypothesis may be briefly stated:

- (a) Its scientific status is at best uncertain; at worst non-existent. I do not like to make a claim that something is a scientific hypothesis and later find it untenable;
- (b) Homeostasis ~~and~~, feed-back loops and cybernetic circuits have already been incorporated into non-living things like our man-made computers. To regard these as the criteria of life seems to me unscientific;
- and (c) The Gaia Hypothesis ~~is~~ is too geo-centric. Not that I mind going back from Copernicus to Ptolemy. A case could be made for that going back. Such case has been made by some; it has failed to convince me. I would prefer to go beyond such earth-centredness, which is part of our problem. I also would

reject such visions of the biosphere as some thin fragile membrane which is only a few hundred miles thick, something existing between the Sun and the earth which supports life as we know it. For me the bio-sphere includes the Sun; without the Sun there is no biosphere. If you include the Sun as part of the biosphere, you already have something many millions of miles thick. But the Sun itself cannot exist independently of the nebulae and the galaxies. If I want to talk about a living being, it would not be just the earth, but the whole universe.

So I have to leave aside the Gaia Hypothesis as a good subject for more "scientific" seminars and conferences, as well as for doctoral dissertations. I have to go beyond to something <sup>namely the grand continuum.</sup> grander. I know scientists prefer to stay ~~with the~~ on terra firma. They feel more secure there with their critical rationality and <sup>time-space</sup> ~~set up~~ experiments. I am by culture and habit a wanderer of the spheres, a bird ~~is~~ on the wing who can only occasionally come down to earth, or at least <sup>light on</sup> to some trees, <sup>or other perch</sup> where to rest or rest.

I must <sup>seek to</sup> soar higher, because I am allergic to easy dualisms and dogmatic monisms. Let me just mention a few of these dualisms that I detest, some of them sacred cows of academic theology. First of all I have difficulty <sup>with</sup> the basic dualism of



of divine-human, so popularized by good old Karl Barth. I belong to that strong tradition in Christianity which believes that the divine and the human have become inseparably one in Jesus Christ, and ~~therefore~~ <sup>therefore</sup> that there is no hostility between the divine and the human. That hostility and the primacy of sin belong to the old realm which has been abolished in Jesus Christ. The divine and the human are inseparably, though unconfusedly, united in Christ Jesus. dualism, and I am also allergic to the secular. Sacred & prophetic-priestly distinctions so dear to certain theological circles. I believe that the prophetic and the priestly are evenly balanced in the Old Testament, and that the Old Testament condemns false prophets <sup>just as</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>as it condemns</sup> ~~strongly~~ false priests. Sometimes people forget the fact that the Revelation on Mount Sinai, was not only the Law or the Torah, but also the pattern of the Tabernacle which Moses was to erect and himself act as Priest along with Aaron and others. The secular-prophetic perspective is a distorted perspective <sup>from which to understand the Bible.</sup>. The Tent and the Temple in Jerusalem were proto-types of the temple built without hands (the ~~area~~ acheiropoieton of the First Markys' Stephen's speech in the Book of Acts). We are that temple in which God lives and manifests himself to others through our actions and words.

I prefer to move from these dualistic contradictory perspectives to a more tri-une perspective, that triunity of the Eternal God so manifest in so many triunities in our universe. You can blame my Eastern Orthodox background for that perspective; but that background I can know away; it is that background that also warns me not to try to understand the Triune God in terms of any <sup>seeming</sup> analogies in the created order.

~~But~~ The Grand Continuum for me means a series of such triune manifestations the will-mind-feeling triunity in myself being one of these. Even in recent Christian theology a new tri-unity has emerged - Justice, Peace and The Integrity of Creation as the three interrelated points to look for in our <sup>understanding of</sup> social renewal. The J.P.I.C. triunity launched by the Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches <sup>in 1983</sup>, may have much to commend it as a proximate goal for Christian social action. But it does not exhaust the Grand Continuum; the other triunity of freedom, community and transcendence ~~for~~ has always to be kept closely associated with J.P.I.C., if it is not to mislead.

Let me begin with another triunity in the Grand Continuum - matter, life and Consciousness, before I go on to my depiction

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of the grand continuum itself.

## Matter, Life and Consciousness

This triunity of the inorganic, the organic and the mental is one that we have to recreate in our perspective. We often tend to see the three in some discontinuous ~~form~~ fashion.

In secular thought this tri-unity is seen in linear-diachronic development. First there was matter, devoid of life or mind, in the present conceptions of Evolution. From matter came life, and from life consciousness.

In the theological evolutionism of people like Teilhard, the conception is more spherical than linear - the geosphere, the biosphere and the noosphere. Teilhard sees the presence of God in the evolution of the three spheres. God, for him, pervades matter, life and mind, uniting them and guiding them in a teleological process.

The universe, for Teilhard, is "ablaze with God", and "Christ is realized in evolution" <sup>(1)</sup>. The 'point Omega' towards which the evolutionary process is directed is Christ himself; it is in Christ that evolution now moves, and the goal

is God in Christ reconciling "all things" unto Himself. That is why he says: "the bosom of Mother Earth is in some way the bosom of God" (2).

however,  
In secular thought, the three - matter, life and mind, are seen as distinct and disjunct. But secular thought finds it difficult today to draw lines of demarcation between matter-energy and life, or between life and Consciousness. We do not know <sup>in modern science</sup> of any Consciousness which is not grounded in matter and life; and the idea that matter itself is without Consciousness becomes difficult to sustain.

Matter itself, we are beginning to see, is created by our perception. We do not know matter ~~is~~ as it is in itself, as we once thought we did. Our 'naive realism' with which science used to operate, is now out-dated. There are no 'things' out there; only 'probability' waves; and there is no 'out there' where 'objective reality' resides. Our science <sup>glimpsed</sup> ~~has~~ that more than 60 years ago, at the International Physical Congress, in Como, Italy, in 1927, when it was recognized that classical <sup>Causal-</sup>mechanical <sup>deterministic</sup> descriptions do not fit the state of a sub-atomic micro-system at any given moment.

As modern physics sees it, the universe, including the knowing subject and the known object, is "one indivisible dynamic whole whose parts are essentially inter-related and can be understood only as patterns of a cosmic process" <sup>2</sup> to quote Fritjof Capra's The Turning Point <sup>(3)</sup>. There is no such thing as "objective knowledge"; ~~there~~ all knowledge is inter-relation, shaped by our senses, our mind, and our measuring equipment. Matter, we now know, is energy; so is life and so is consciousness.

Modern science was founded on the assumption that reality is regular, existing independently of the observer, causally determined, and therefore knowable by the rational mind in terms of those regularities and of the principle of causality. Neither determinacy nor mechanical causality operate at the strict level, in the heart of matter. The 'laws of ~~science~~ <sup>nature</sup>' are no longer seen as universal or 'written into nature', but simply observed constancies in the interaction between the human mind and the universe.

Quantum theory has substantially fundamentally questioned the universality of the laws of Newtonian Mechanics in relation not only to matter, but also to life. The prevailing Theory of Evolution is linked to Newtonian Mechanics and the attempt to

explain phenomena including matter, life and consciousness ~~so~~ in terms of linear, mechanical Causality. Even individual events of genetic revolution leading to the emergence of new species ~~are~~ still sought to be explained in terms of mechanical Causality. Many biologists still try to account for trans-specific mutation as merely the cumulative effect of many generations of intra-specific mutation, which is the only thing we can observe. Since 1980, the new theory, not of continuous and uniform evolution, but of "punctuated equilibrium" has come into vogue. Steven J. Gould, for example, argues that evolution was marked by long periods of stasis, interspersed or punctuated by sudden bursts of mutation leading to speciation<sup>4</sup>. Still the attempt is to stick to mechanical causality to understand life.

Our knowledge of matter and of life, is still in the initial stages. We know even less about consciousness and the laws which guide it. Knowing itself is a dynamic process; the somatic base of thought and consciousness is still very much of an enigma.

Gregory Bateson, one of the most perceptive thinkers of recent times, argues that the knowing process and the evolutionary process are governed by similar sets of laws, and are inter-related, though differing in 'logical typing'. His book Mind and Nature : A Necessary Unity<sup>⑤</sup> is full of brilliant ideas:

"In sum, I shall assume that evolutionary change and somatic change (including learning and thought) are fundamentally similar; that both are stochastic in nature, although surely the ideas (injunctions, descriptive propositions and so on) on which each process works are of totally different logical typing from the typing of ideas in the other process" <sup>⑥</sup>

his  
~~the~~ six criteria of the mental process apply equally to the evolutionary process, and that "the two fit together into an ongoing biosphere that could not endure if either somatic or genetic change were fundamentally different from what it is". Bateson concludes:

"The unity of the combined system is necessary".<sup>7</sup> (italics in original)

Bateson argues that evolutionary change and human bodily change, whether genetic or learning, are both mental processes - not mechanical processes, and that the two are inseparable from each other. He defines 'mind' or 'mental' as follows:

1. A mind is an aggregate of inter-acting parts or components.
2. The inter-action between parts of mind is triggered by difference; difference is non-substantial; not located in time and space; difference is neither matter nor energy; it is related to entropy and negentropy.
3. Mental process requires collateral energy.
4. Mental process requires circular, more complex, non-linear chains of determination.
5. In mental process, the effects of difference are to be regarded as transforms or coded versions of events which preceded them. The rules of such



transformation must be more stable than the content of transformation, but the rules too are subject to transformation.

6. The description and classification of these processes of transformation ~~disclose~~ disclose a hierarchy of logical types immanent in the phenomena.

It is indeed a breath-taking vision. Mental processes are not limited to living beings as we know them, but to the universe itself. It is a much more exciting, and I believe a much more scientific hypothesis than the Gaia Hypothesis.

Our customary dualisms between material and spiritual, or ~~re~~ organic and inorganic, would have to be fundamentally revised if we agree with Greg Bateson. Matter never was without mind. Mind moves matter as a whole.

Now for a little caveat <sup>exciting idea</sup> at ~~my respected~~ <sup>much</sup> Greg Bateson's, and I shall move to my final point and conclusion.

The Caveat is not meant to be disrespectful. In fact Greg Bateson is one of those thinkers <sup>for</sup> whom I have immense respect. But he does something, which all of us are prone to do, because the mechanistic model is so deeply ingrained in ~~the~~ our mental equipment. What Bateson is saying <sup>is</sup> that the four levels of reality are together one integral system.

The four levels are micro, macro, mega and mental — the sub-atomic <sup>level</sup>, the level of our ordinary perception which I call macro, the cosmic universe level which I call mega, and the fourth level of <sup>mind or</sup> human consciousness. They are all aspects ~~of~~ or levels in a single reality, the evolving universe, which itself is guided by a process that is best understood as mental. They are one single system, composed of several inter-locking systems, Bateson argues.

It is ~~not~~ <sup>at</sup> that 'system' concept that my caveat is ~~least~~ directed. 'System' itself, I submit, is a mechanical concept. A cybernetic system is the most sophisticated of all man-made machines. But it is still a machine, and reality I submit, cannot

be ultimately conceived in mechanical terms, even if the mechanical model of the cybernetic system is the most sophisticated that we can readily conceive. Bateson oscillates between perception of reality as a mental process, and as a cybernetic system. My own submission is that Reality always transcends all mechanical or mental models and concepts.

I can see the four levels in the Grand Continuum - the micro, the macro, the mega and the mental. I would like to see the whole ~~be~~ with its four levels as a process analogous to the evolutionary process and the human mental process. But a process is still a time-space model. And we know that time and space as we conceive it cannot be absolute.

We need to be more modest about our conceptual capacity to grasp reality. I do recognize the value of ~~the~~ conceptual rationality for our life here on earth, <sup>since we are</sup> creatures of time and space. And at that point I agree with the Neo-Platonist Plotinus who in the third century

suggested that the two things which we regard as fundamental to human identity - namely reason and language - are only temporal, suited to finding our way in this time-space world, but not integral to the human in its trans-temporal existence. I agree also with Gregory of Nyssa, who in the fourth century sang the praises of the human epinoia or creative conceptual-imaginative capacity which accounts for all the marvels of our world, the achievements of our science and technology. But I ~~also~~ agree with Gregory ~~also~~ that the human creative mind has also created many monstrosities; ~~like~~ ~~and~~ in our time we recognize ~~the~~ nuclear, ~~and~~ chemical and bacteriological weapons, and the militarisation of the world as clear examples of such man-made monstrosities.

I have I believe, a fairly sober estimate of the value of language and reason, but I do not think that either of them - language or conceptual rationality can grasp the truth. So even a system concept of the Grand Continuum would be not totally reliable, so long as it remains a concept, a model, a ~~poor~~ rational perception.

## The Grand Continuum and The Kingdom of God

By the Grand Continuum I mean more than the four-level reality - the micro-macro-mega-mental. Those four levels do not exhaust reality. They constitute one dimension of reality, which has many dimensions, some of which are not open to our senses or to our rationality. Science today begins to concede the existence of these other dimensions.

Our Christian faith cannot be secular in the sense that we confine our concern to these four levels. Teilhard de Chardin, who sees God in Christ ~~permeating~~ <sup>seeing</sup> all the four levels, ~~regards~~ makes the mistake of <sup>seeing</sup> the "evolution" of Christ as confined to historical reality as we perceive it. History is also only one dimension of reality. And the Kingdom of God is more than what can be confined within history, though it has been manifest in history.

For me the Grand Continuum means the Trinity of God, Self and World, or God, Humanity and Cosmos, which in turn exists only in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our Conceptual-linguistic Categories are woefully inadequate to cope with these higher tri-unities. In fact, I find our ritual or liturgical categories more adequate than language and conceptuality to give

expression to our faint apprehensions of this  
 Great Continuum of God, Humanity and Universe.  
 Worship is much more the language of faith  
 than dogma or theology. It is not the text  
 of the liturgy that matters so much as the  
 Corporate liturgical act of the community  
 of faith; it is in the eucharist that the  
 faith-community experiences the supreme mystery,  
 Christ in us, the Hope of glory. There we see  
 Humanity in Christ, offering up the whole creation  
 in Christ to the Father, and receiving into ~~ourselves~~  
 God's self-giving in Christ. It is in this  
 continuous eucharistic mode of existence that the  
 believing community experiences the highest  
 level of truth — not in theology or dogma,  
 not in ethics or social renewal, not in  
 superficial notions of revolution and liberation,  
 but in the ~~Corporate~~ Corporate eucharistic liturgical  
 act.

This Corporate liturgical act —  
 rather than any descriptive account — ~~that~~  
 brings us into living contact with the ultimate  
 Grand Continuum of God, Humanity and Universe,  
 and equips us for our eucharistic-anamnestic  
 presence within that Grand Continuum.  
 This indeed is the Kingdom of God, God in us,  
 God in the whole created order, God in humanity

It is this new reality of the Kingdom of God, ~~at~~ that Christ has initiated by the incarnation of the Son of God. The mystery of the Kingdom, which cannot be reduced to concept or proposition, cannot be objectively grasped; it has to be subjectively and experientially participated - always in community, through God the Holy Spirit. The Kingdom is God in Christ in us, in humanity, in the cosmos, reconciling all things to himself. But it is not apprehended by conceptual proposition or critical rationality. It is lived by the community of faith, in worship and <sup>in the</sup> anamnetic life of the community.

24  
The consequences

You must be wondering why this  
abstruse, seemingly irrelevant, excursus into  
rarefied metaphysical realms where ordinary  
people cannot get a foot-hold. I have an  
answer which may also <sup>appear to be</sup> somewhat abstract  
or ~~abstruse~~ abstruse. So let me try to begin  
more concretely. How many of you have  
read James Turner's Without God, Without  
Breed? The Origins of Unbelief in America  
(Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and  
London, 1985)? I commend it to you.

His argument is that it is not  
science and rationality that have under-  
mined belief in God & in many educated  
people. It is the transparent immorality of  
religion that made belief in God repulsive  
to many scientists and ~~the~~ humanists. But  
for a long time they held on to belief in  
God, keeping their revulsion to the organized  
Church. Once secular rationality began



to establish a humanist morality, it-  
seemed safer for <sup>thinking</sup> people to abandon faith  
in God - not consciously perhaps, but "in  
the subliminal reaches of the Victorian or  
perhaps human, mind" (p 225)

In science as well as in  
morality God became superfluous, already  
~~before~~ <sup>at</sup> the end of the last century. Of course  
once God goes out, humanity comes in  
as the highest value. This is in fact what  
the European as well as the American  
Enlightenment <sup>achieved</sup> ~~did~~. Humanity is the new God,  
Humanity married to the goddess Progress.  
Faith in progress was the spur for activism,  
for science/technology, for education and  
for "development", the three children of the  
marriage between <sup>deified</sup> humanity and <sup>deified</sup> progress  
~~and their deification~~. We had thus a trinity  
of humanity-progress, and a nice-little set  
of three divine children: science/tech, education and  
'development' to whom we erected huge temples  
~~through~~ <sup>in</sup> our universities, research institutes, factories,  
dams and bridges, energy projects and particle  
accelerators. Churches also joined the chorus  
that sang the praises of this new Holy Family.

That is our secular liturgy today - worship of humanity and progress, and adoration of science-technology, education and development. Christians too join in this secular liturgy. It is this secular liturgy to which we offer up our wealth and our energies. Professionalism in science-technology, in education, and in economic-industrial development <sup>drove us to</sup> replaced the professionalism of the clergymen, like the ones including yours truly, trained in theological seminaries like Princeton. In our eagerness to get right with modernity, we joined the secular liturgy and struggled to keep the faith within the framework of that liturgy. We made our obeisance to the twin gods of humanity and progress, and to their children, science-technology, education and economic-industrial development.

We went even further, tailoring our religion and theology to the demands of that secular liturgy. We created theologies of revolution, theologies of liberation, feminist theologies, Black theologies, always seeking to pick up the <sup>dominant</sup> themes of the secular liturgy.

According to James Turner, three transformations did away with the ~~rest~~ need for God - the intellectual and emotional functions that belief fulfilled. Our need to understand 'Nature' as created by God, was to be fulfilled through the scientific study of 'nature' as self-existent; our need for God as moral governor was fulfilled by the new humanitarian secular ethics. The third dimension of God, as the awesome punisher, receded and was ~~rejected~~ <sup>regarded</sup> as naive and primitive. Nothing was <sup>any longer</sup> awesome. Reality was benign. It was compatible with human wants, aspirations and ways of understanding. If there was awe, it was for the great achievements of human science-technology, education and development, perhaps a little for art, a little for nature, mostly for human artifacts - not for the Lord of the Universe.

Church leaders and thinkers, in deciding to deal with modernity by embracing it, marginalized Transcendence. Belief was no longer in the Transcendent, but in human experience. The kingdom of God was to be sought in historical human experience and achievements.

Heroic thinkers like Karl Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr sought to ~~pull~~ pry belief loose from the shackles of liberal humanism. But the effect has failed to last. Only Fundamentalism seems a viable option for those who want to keep their faith in the Transcendent. As James Turner concluded:

"Those who wish to believe in God ought to realize that, if belief is to remain plausible over the long haul, they cannot regard God as if human, sharing human interests and purposes, accessible to human comprehension ... No one form of knowing can possibly navigate the labyrinth of reality.... The universe is not tailored to our measurements."

29.  
Conclusion

Let me conclude with three observations:

1. Any attempt to exhaust the Gospel in terms of some reigning human concern - be it liberation, justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation or whatever, can have disastrous consequence.

On the other hand,  
2. The transcendence of God cannot be affirmed by positing God as totally other, unrelated to what happens in the four levels of the Grand Continuum - the micro, the macro, the mega and the mental. We must in the same breath affirm the continuity and the discontinuity the immanence and the transcendence.

3. We should not try to seek to overcome the limits of human reason and language by <sup>seeking to</sup> bringing the whole of reality within human conceptual grasp. The element of transcending mystery has to be re-awakened. But the transcendent must be acknowledged as immanently active at all four levels - also in church, humanity and cosmos.

4. The great mystery of God in us, God in all humanity, God in the whole cosmos, must be experienced in our liturgical worship, experienced by participation of the body and mind, of intellect, will and feeling, but in the ~~great~~ Community of the Spirit.

5. If this is so, our training programme for ministers of the Gospel would have to be radically different from what it now is - in all our churches.

## Notes

1. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
2. op. cit
3. Fontana Paperback, London, 1983, p. 66
4. <sup>See</sup> Steven J. Gould and N. Eldredge,  
"Punctuated Equilibria: The Tempo and  
Mode of Evolution Reconsidered", in  
Paleobiology 3 (1977) pp 115-151.
5. Toronto, New York, London, Bantam  
New Age Books, 1980. ~~see p. 164~~
6. op. cit p. 164
7. ibid.
8. op. cit p. 102. <sup>but</sup> see ch. IV: pp 99-142

## W H A T   I S   M A N ?

A question for Educators  
(Fr. Paul Verghese)

"You, Gentleman, take your lists of human interests from averages furnished by statistics and economic formulas. Your lists of interests include only prosperity, riches, freedom, tranquillity, and so forth, and anyone who openly and knowingly disagreed with these lists would, in your opinion, (as in mine also, for that matter), be either an obscurantist or madman"

That was said more than a hundred years ago - by no less a person than Feodor Dostoevsky.\* The controversy about the nature of man rose to high heat in the verbal exchanges among the Russian intelligentsia of the latter half of the 19th century.

The major spokesman for advanced revolutionary socialist opinion then was N.G. Chernyshevsky. Both Chernyshevsky and Dostoevsky came from the revolutionary underground of Czarist Russia. The debate between them is of intense interest both for our educational systems and our civilizations.

In fact Chernyshevsky seems to have been the main target of Dostoevsky's attack. (we will now refer to them as C and D). C had just brought out his revolutionary work "What Is to Be Done?" + in 1864. He was in jail when he wrote the book. But, on publication of the book, he was sentenced to hard labour in Siberia, where he remained for 19 years. D's book was written as a reply to C. D too had been in prison and in Siberia.

C spoke for the progressive young radicals of his time. The main point was that man could be understood rationally, that human life and human behaviour were to be explained in material and physiological terms. To them the reform of society was purely a matter of scientific reflection and strategic planning. They remind one of the early planners of India's own economy.

The distinction between C and his previous generation of revolutionaries like Bakunin and Turgenev lay in the fact that the latter were *intellectuals* without a programme, while C and his type were incipient Marxists

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\* Letters from the Underworld first published 1864  
Eng. Tr. Everman's London 1964

+ Eng. Tr. Dr. E. H. Carr in Vintage Russian Library, New York 1961.



with a social programme for the remarking a man. The previous generation was basically theoretical utopians. Chernyshevsky and his colleagues were practical socialists who wanted to build an economy that would banish the profit motive, competition and exploitation. It was more practical utopianism.

Their main purpose, however, was not to build the economy, but to create "new men" in a new society. These new men were to be practical, regular and calculating in their activity, self-less, hard-working, co-operative, responsible, decent, peaceful, tranquil, prosperous, rich, free. Small wonder then that Lenin hailed him as "a great Russian Socialist" though open to criticism as utopian.

It is against this grey, humourless, unpoetic, stream-lined utopia that Dostoevsky revoked in his Letters from the Underground. D satirizes on the "Golden Palace" which the "practical utopians" wanted to build, ordinary human beings would be bored to death with such a universe.

"For instance, I should not be surprised if, amid all this order and regularity of the future, there should suddenly arise, from some quarter or another, some gentleman of lowborn - or, rather, of retrograde and cynical - demeanour who, setting his arms akimbo should say to you all: 'How now, gentlemen? Would it not be a good thing if, with one consent, we were to kick all this solemn wisdom to the winds, and to send these logarithms to the devil, and to begin to live our lives again according to our own stupid whims?' Yet this would be as nothing; the really shameful part of the business would be that this gentleman would find a goodly number of adherents. Such is always man's way" \*

D explains himself later on "See here, reason is an excellent thing. I do not deny that for a moment, but reason is reason, and no more, and satisfies only the reasoning faculty in man, whereas volition is a manifestation of all life (that is to say, of human life as a whole, with reason and every other sort of appendage included)"

Here Dostoevsky speaks as a \_\_\_\_\_ and an Augustinian.

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For St. Augustine, in any case, the will was the central element in man. Man is totally evil for his will is totally enslaved to evil. His reason too is distorted by his evil will.

In fact, it seems impossible for Christians to come to terms with any doctrine of man until we have re-examined our Augustinian heritage. Writers like Chernyskuský proceed on the assumptions that progress is inevitable and that man is capable of recreating himself as the "new man". Even such a pro-Christian thinker like Teilhard de Chardin seems to operate on the basis of this doctrine of inevitable progress and development, though he carefully qualifies himself in this regard.

But the stark Augustinian contrast between the infinite power and goodness of God and the total weakness and sinfulness of man, still plays a large role in Christian thought and bedevils every attempt to formulate a usable anthropology in education. We cannot, with Augustine draw the sharp antagonism between Jerusalem the city of God and Babylon the city of the earth; the one totally good the other totally evil. The wheat and the tares are growing together and history is always an inseparable union of Jerusalem and Babylon, no man belonging exclusively to the one or the other.

Neither can we accept Augustine's basic dictum that the human will, without special grace, is incapable of any good. The divine will does operate through human wills, and human beings do will the good from time to time, even when they are not Christians who have experienced the special grace of God in baptism.

Augustine has also, because of his preoccupation with sin as a tyrant who holds us in slavery, failed to provide us with a notion of salvation that is sufficiently positive, this worldly and corporate. We cannot become true educators today without such a view of man.

Augustine's views on the body as generically corrupt and on the regenerative act as essentially concupiscent and therefore sinful, also cry out for today.

both of which are implicitly individualistic, also call for some balancing qualifications in our time.

It may be of some interest to our readers that not all Christians have accepted Augustine as a teachers of the Church. The whole Eastern tradition has ~~not~~ consistently refused to regard him either as one of the fathers of the ~~Shankh~~ Church or as an authentic teacher of the faith. Only the Medieval western church made his ideas so central and all pervasive in western Christianity.

A more dynamic, less defective, and certainly more acceptable anthropology is offered to us by one who is regarded as a Father and Doctor by both the ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ Western and Eastern traditions - Gregory of Nyssa, who lived a generation before St. Augustine in the 4th Century. Only in the light of Gregory's thought can we begin to grasp the basic

of a Teilhard de Chardin, or to develop some categories with which to judge between Dostoevsky and Chertyskuskyy.

There is room here only to state the main lines of Gregory's thought in slogans and sentences.

1. Man is an integral part of creation and cannot be understood or saved in isolation from the rest of creation. The creation was made for man and finds its fulfilment in time. The salvation of man has to be also the salvation of creation of matter itself.

2. Man is distinguished from the rest of creation by his "ruling power" over the creation. Man is made to be the Lord of Creation. This is his essential nature and vocation, as created in the image of God. Man's capacity for tool-making is an essential aspect of this Lordship of Man. He is born more weak and defenseless than other animal infants and continues longer that way in order that he has to acquire mental qualities which compensate for his helplessness. He is not born equipped with all the strength of the Ox or the claws of the Lion, but by developing tools and weapons he has to master the lion and the Ox. Man's education therefore should involve the development of this ruling power.

3. Man's mind which is the ruling power within him operates through the senses; the senses work through different parts of the body. Mind - senses - body - there are inseparable and the growth of man involves the development of all these - inseparably and integrally.

4. Man's essential nature is given him - to be in the image of God. Sin is not his created being; by creation he is good, and called to be the perfection of all good. Sin is extensive, an intruder, something which has come in from outside his nature. Man cannot be understood in terms of sin, though sin remains per in human nature.

5. Because man's essential nature is constituted as a reflection or phenomenon of the goodness of God, there is no limit to human development. He is to participate in all good. Only God is his limit. Man is different from God only in two essential respects (a) God is unoriginate; He has the source of his being within himself. Man is originate; his being is derived from outside of himself, from God (b) God is what he wills and wills what he is; therefore he is beyond change and therefore beyond time. Man is not yet what he ought to be, and has constantly to change; he is therefore in time, subject to change - a historical being always at the point of intersection between a past and a future.

6. To participate fully in the good, freedom is necessary. There is no virtue which is under compulsion or slavery. Man's native as perfection of goodness is to be freely achieved, not by mere passive acceptance of a grace infused from outside. He therefore has to achieve freedom by the control of the passions, by the control of the environment and by free creativity.

7. Man is primarily corporate. His individuality is secondary. The body is the principle of individualization in an entity called Man who is essentially corporate. Perfection itself belongs ultimately to the whole of Mankind; the individual's free goodness is contributory to the perfection of all good. Only in the final recapitulation with this essentially corporate nature of man be fully revealed.

To grasp the fundamental aspects of St Gregory's anthropology, one has to apprehend his analysis of the God-Man-World-Christ complex.